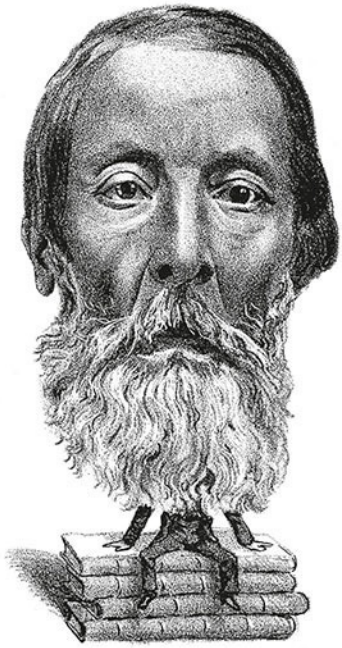
The
Almost Mythical



# Andrea Crestadoro

Lucy M Evans

# THE ALMOST MYTHICAL ANDREA CRESTADORO

## Crystal Palace Exhibitor and Chief Librarian of Manchester

Great names! Is it fancy or false perspective that makes me think we have few to put against them now? The almost legendary Dr. Garnett was there, the almost mythical Dr. Crestadoro[1]

**Lucy M. Evans**

Crystal Palace Foundation

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[1] Frank Pacy, 'The LA: early days: a retrospect. By the Honorary Secretary', in *Proceedings of the 50th Anniversary Conference of the Library Association held at Edinburgh 26th-30th September 1927* (London: Library Association, 1928) p.53

**To Kathryn Bennetto (1947 – 2014)**

**To R.G. Meadley, Gerard Roberts, Harry Meadley and Rachel Carter for living with Crestadoro for so long and still encouraging me.**

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### In short

I also appreciate that many others, too numerous to list, have generously given their advice, suggested sources and supplied documents. I owe you all.

All the surmises, conclusions, and any mistakes are mine: no one above is responsible.

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## Translations

All texts given as translations

## Abbreviations

AACR: Anglo American Cataloguing Rules
ALA: American Library Association
AS: Aeronautical Society
BL: The British Library
BM: British Museum/British Museum Library

*BNB*: *British National Bibliography*

CILIP: Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

DDC: Dewey Decimal Classification

*DNB*: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

FRBR: Functional Requirements of Bibliographic Records

L&SWR: The London and South Western Railway

LA: Library Association

LCSH: Library of Congress Subject Headings

MA:Manchester Library and Archives

NA: National Archives

PO: Patent Office

POL: Patent Office Library

RAS: Royal Aeronautical Society

SRIS: Science Reference Information Services

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# Stepping In

I think last night

You were drawing circles around me

I drift along the dim corridors. Where is the door to the lost museum of mechanics and 760 phrenology busts? Where is the farthest room where the secrets lurk: the godmother's spinning wheel, the haystacks turned to gold, the dragon's egg, the alchemist's crucible, or the clock of perpetual time?

Cluttered corners and soaring walls are blocked with crates, stamped and labelled like well-travelled P&O passenger luggage: New York, Milan, Brussels, Paris, Madras, Tasmania, West Indies, London. The signs and seals engrave a world of booksellers, agents, publishers, printers, embassies, as bright and elaborate as the printed cotton bales in the heaving city beyond.

The ornate contraptions of sunlight burners and hydrocarbon lights sputter overhead, and the spray of oily drops sting. I raise my hand to knock at the heavy door, varnish as thick and black as pitch. The thought flickers of the building's tumultuous days as Robert Owen's Hall of Science, and of the disreputable abandonment afterwards. See the ladies of the night slipping back to Cupid's Alley, as the authoritative officials of the first ever Manchester Free Library stride in, restoring the CampField shrine to brightness.

"Come in, come in, my friend!"

And there he is as I push open the door, turning from a table piled perilously high with wires, papers, tubes, burners, balsa wood, and bubbling glue. Sulphorous fogs outside blank the high windows: gaslight touches daylight with golden fingers. The magnificent beard, high forehead and warm brown eyes of Professor Andrea Crestadoro beam towards me, shining in the gilded gloom.

He enthuses over the glider but I find theory and technical concepts hard to follow. Soon he stops: he has to go. Sutton will be looking for him, Chairman Baker is on a visit, Councillor Rawson on the prowl, there are enquiries from all over Britain on setting up Free Libraries, there are letters to send across the world, catalogues to post in exchange for donations, catalogue slips to compile, booksellers, railway station masters, insurance agents to chase up, there is the printer, the coal man, the failing lights to deal with, the reader who has complained yet again about the assistants' rudeness, and the police to consult about the assault last night, and worse of all, statistics for the annual report and a memorandum needed for the next meeting of the Manchester Free Libraries Committee. No matter: he is well used to it and today he will be introducing a new female assistant

to the staff.

He twinkles at me. Perhaps I am seeking a position: he is sure he can find one!

“No, Professor - I am here to remember you.”

The room dips and shifts: the Professor’s figure is telescoping, dimming, vanishing and whirling away with the spiralling streams of bricks of the CampField Library, spinning together into the vortex, a tornado of books, journals, catalogue pages and indexes.

“But why? What did I leave – was it the metallic balloon? The propeller? The fire grate? The communication device? It surely cannot have been the Impulsoria!”

I shout after him, crying through the maelstrom of hurtling years, wild leaves on the roaring winds:

“It is none of those - but all of those! It is not one thought but all your thoughts! For from them came the glimmer of the great electronic universe, the World Wide Web, the objects that all carry information: you are the father of the permutated index! And yes – the metallic balloon!”

The tiny figure is vanishing into the eternal dark but the smile is there like the Cheshire Cat’s grin.

“My balloon - and my index! Can it be my ‘Art of Making Catalogues’ is still remembered?”

“It is and will be more!” I cry. “American professors cite your name! And on the stones of CampField now rises the Air and Space Museum and within it you are honoured for the metallic balloon! And we have free education, women are equal and run libraries! Taxation is still a mess!”

“And my wife and nephew? What became of them?”

I have no reply and our communications across time, space, through and round the ethers of electricity, cordless sound and oceanic transmission are gone.

> If I walk down this hallway
> Tonight, it’s too quiet
> So I pad through the dark
> And call you on the phone
> Push your old numbers
> And let your house ring
> Till I wake your ghost
>
> Let him walk down your hallway
> It’s not this quiet
> Slide down your receiver
> Sprint across the wire
> Follow my number
> Slide into my hand
>
> It’s the blaze across my nightgown
> It’s the phone ring
>
> I think last night
> You were driving circles around me.’[2]

*With thanks to Kristin Hersh*

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[2] Kristin Hersh, *Your Ghost*, in *Hips and Makers* (UK, 4AD Records, 1994)

# Introduction

Why ‘almost mythical’? Crestadoro rarely surfaces but when he does it is in such an odd mixture of obscure contexts that he is endowed with fable.

He was the man of the metallic balloon, of old-fashioned library catalogues, of index structures rediscovered by computer scientists in the 1950s, and the part inventor of a fantastic machine, the Impulsoria. He was cloaked in mystery, even in his own lifetime. Crestadoro was known as the old Doctor of esoteric knowledge, the Italian Professor from Turin, the picturesque incomer to Manchester, the genial companion but the reclusive scholar: the perceptions vary. He also hid another identity.

The name ‘Crestadoro’ itself is rare, even in Italy, and has something of legendary ring: who was this Crest of Gold person?

There are no personal letters, diaries, photographs or family descendants to enable a full biography and much has to be speculation. This book is primarily based on Crestadoro’s works, inventions, and incursions into the Victorian world of publishing, information and Free Libraries. It is told through the stories of the people and the events that surround his adventures.

The book falls into five parts. These are not strictly chronological, for the themes crisscross, reflecting how Crestadoro veered between inventions, writing and a professional career.

The first part gives a brief biography and description of sources used. The second covers Crestadoro’s years in Italy and his works written in Italian and French. The third part is his arrival in England in 1849 and his entanglements with invention, which continued to the end of his life. The fourth part is his time in London, working as an indexer and writing *The Art of Making Catalogues*.[3] The fifth part is the longest: Crestadoro’s final period in Manchester, finding security and respect as the city’s third Chief Librarian.

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[3] Andrea Crestadoro, *The Art of Making Catalogues of Libraries: Or, a Method to Obtain in a Short Time a Most Perfect, Complete, and Satisfactory Printed Catalogue of the British Museum Library by a Reader Therein* (London: The Literary, Scientific & Artistic Reference Office, 1856)

# Chapter One: The Tattooed Silhouette

'Dr. ANDREA CRESTADORO, one of the most picturesque figures in bibliotheca annals'[4]

## Encountering Crestadoro

Given Andrea Crestadoro's obscurity, I should explain how I first discovered him.

I spent a varied working life at The British Library (BL) Boston Spa. In 2003 I was embroiled in a project to reclassify the science collections at BL London. In my background reading, I unearthed a contemptuous remark written in 1897 by the pioneering librarian, James Duff Brown. This was to the effect that no one nowadays paid any attention to the ideas of Andrea Crestadoro who believed all books could be catalogued from the title page alone.

At this time our cataloguing backlog stood at around 200,000 items with countless more in BL London. I joked with colleagues that we should try out the Crestadoro method instead of the full standards that, as a national library, we applied.

I then wondered who this Andrea Crestadoro actually was. I followed up the entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (*DNB)*[5], found several references to his role in information, and then read his pamphlet published in 1856, *The Art of Making Catalogues.* It was a revelation. Crestadoro was a remarkably modern thinker who had even envisaged a sort of Victorian Internet.

My ensuing obsession was triggered by three personal themes.

Firstly, I became conscious of Crestadoro's influence on the catalogues, rules and database structures of my daily work. Secondly, like so many others including myself, Crestadoro had stumbled into librarianship rather than choosing it as a career. Thirdly he became Chief Librarian of

Manchester Free Libraries and was proud to be a Mancunian. Had he served at another of the Free Libraries, I might not have embarked on this book. But Manchester is my hometown, the city of my imagination and ancestors. Manchester libraries were the sacred places of my childhood.

## Biographical Outline

Some vanished buildings describe their history in outlines left on the walls of neighbouring structures: the tattooed silhouettes of development and demolition. This is how I think of Crestadoro, the outline is there but it is hard to perceive and solidify.

Before considering where these traces exist or, more prosaically, the sources I have used, here is the map of Crestadoro's life, focused on four major cities, all nodes of energy and change.

## Italy

Crestadoro was born in 1808 in Genoa. On 19 September 1826, he took his vows as a priest of the Piarist Order, a history he concealed in England. He published two works in 1843, an Italian grammar and a treatise on savings banks. He studied at the University of Turin, laboriously gaining his degree there between June and December 1844. He contributed to an Italian translation of Bancroft's *History of America* in 1847.

At some stage in the 1840s, he became involved with Clemente Masserano, a director of a factory in Turin and inventor of a horse-powered locomotive known as the Impulsoria. Masserano brought Crestadoro into his Impulsoria syndicate and thus gave him the opportunity to escape Italy at a time of political turmoil. Without this backing Crestadoro might have been denied papers and a passport to permit travel.

## Paris and London

The first stage of the Impulsoria journey took him from Italy to France. In early 1848, he was in Paris at the Rue de Rivoli with others of the Impulsoria syndicate. In May 1849, he and Masserano embarked from Ostend to Dover in May 1849, and in this transition he turned from 'sacerdote' to plain Mr., Doctor or Professor Crestadoro. In June 1850, Masserano and Crestadoro trialled the Impulsoria at Nine Elms Station in London. Masserano departed but Crestadoro stayed on.

By his own account he had not planned this: '…in 1849, he visited England, intending to stay two or three months. But he found British institutions were so much to his liking that he made this country his home, and with the exception of a few passing vacation trips to his native land, has spent the whole of the last thirty years in his adopted country.'[6]

Crestadoro tried to earn a living as an inventor. He took out several patents throughout his life, none of which were successful. Between 1849 and 1862 he lived at different addresses and in different roles as inventor, tutor and indexer in London. These addresses are mainly recorded through his reader tickets for the British Museum Library (BM). In 1851 he was also a resident of Salford, preparing his Impulsoria machine for the Great Exhibition's Industrial Section in the Crystal Palace.

## Gap

There is one gap in his residential record. There is no correspondence recorded in the BM Archive or other English sources for the period between January 1860 and September 1861. Nor are there any traces of London addresses.

1860 was the critical year when, after half a century of tumult, the Risorgimento, the new Italian nation was formed. Where was Crestadoro in this critical period? Was he one of Garibaldi's greybeard scholars who joined him on his victorious invasion of Sicily in May 1860? There is no evidence for this romantic speculation, but Crestadoro did play some part for in 1861 he published a work in French, *Du Pouvoir Temporel*, that he claimed influenced both Cavour and General Menabrea, respectively the first and third prime ministers of unified Italy. The subject was the Pope's secular power, a burning issue for the new Italian nation.

## Sampson Low

Midway through his London period, Crestadoro assisted the publisher Sampson Low in producing what amounted to a national bibliography, the *English Catalogue* (first called the *British Catalogue*). Sampson Low, in the 1858 *Subject Index*, paid tribute to Crestadoro's transformation of the publication.

Crestadoro's experience as an editor and indexer with Sampson Low led to a watershed change. Against strong competition he won the contract in 1862 to create a printed catalogue for the Reference Library of the Manchester Free Libraries. This was a formidable task, for all previous attempts had failed.

## Manchester

His good fortune held out, as he was on the spot when the vacancy of Chief Librarian came up in 1863. The Library Committee, impressed by his faultless delivery of the catalogue, had no hesitation in offering him the post. He was appointed officially in May 1864.

It was remarkable for an Italian to gain this prestigious position but no one in Manchester raised objections. The Italian community there was highly regarded for their skills and for the businesses they had developed there since the eighteenth century. In London another librarian, the great Antonio Panizzi, contended with continual spite and resentment that, as an Italian, he had become first Keeper of Printed Books and then Principal Librarian at the BM.

Personality played a part. Panizzi was a formidable character, uncompromising with his opponents, whereas Crestadoro was genial and kindly with many friends. I have only traced one sneer at Crestadoro's nationality and that came after his death, from an outsider.

Crestadoro thus became the third Chief Librarian of Manchester. After much conflict the first Chief Librarian, Edward Edwards, had been dismissed by the Library Committee. The second Chief Librarian, R. W. Smiles was thought to have resigned when he could no longer tolerate the Committee's rule. Crestadoro was tactful in his relations with the dictatorial Committee, won their respect and retained his post until his death in 1879.

## Family

The security of his position in Manchester triggered Crestadoro's marriage, on 17 March 1864, to Margaret Elizabeth Chittleburgh at the Old Church, St Pancras, in London. They settled in Manchester, first at Rumford Street and then at Upper Brook Street. As he stated in his application to the Home Office for naturalisation he intended to remain in Great Britain. His request was granted on April 1866.

Crestadoro holidayed in Harrogate, Scarborough and the Isle of Wight and continued to visit family in Genoa and La Spezia (Spezzia), transformed by Cavour from a fishing village to major naval

base and arsenal. He rescued an orphaned nephew from Italy and placed him in a school to become an English gentleman.

## Inventions

Despite the demands of his Manchester post, Crestadoro did not abandon invention and economics. In 1868 he produced another patent, this time on air locomotion. His models of metallic balloons are still remembered in aeronautical circles. Crestadoro demonstrated the models at the Crystal Palace First Aeronautical Exhibition in 1868 and then travelled to Brussels, possibly in connection with the exhibition.

Crestadoro was a member of the Manchester Society for the Promotion of Scientific Industry and was active in its Exhibition of Appliances for the Saving of Fuel, held on the 30 January 1874 at Peel Park, Salford. He produced a patent on a self-feeding grate and entered his model in the exhibition, together with an improved poker.

## Taxation Reform

Instead of consolidating his career at the first annual meeting of the Library Association (LA) Conference in Oxford, 1-3 October 1878, he chose to be in Cheltenham on 26 October, presenting a paper on taxation reform to the Congress of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, Section Economy and Trade.

## Award

In 1878 Umberto I, son of the first king of the new Italy, Victor Emmanuel II, succeeded to the throne and soon afterwards awarded Crestadoro with Corona d'Italia with the rank of knight. Crestadoro lost no time in adding the title to his pamphlet on tax reform.

## Death

Crestadoro died at home on 7 April 1879, and was buried at the private Ardwick Cemetery in Manchester, alongside other eminent citizens. This cemetery was destroyed in the 1960s.

## Publications

Throughout his life, Crestadoro produced an assortment of publications: three early works in Italian, the French work, *Du Pouvoir Temporel*, patents for inventions, a pamphlet (in English and in French) on taxation reform, and the printed index catalogues and annual reports for Manchester Free Libraries. Most significant of all is the little book he wrote in 1856 entitled *The Art of Making Catalogues*. His obituary mentions a lost manuscript on joint stock companies.

## Reputation

The significant achievements of Crestadoro's life lie mainly within the English period.

It is clear from his frequent references that Crestadoro took as much pride in becoming an English citizen as he did in the title of professor from the University of Turin. Crestadoro declared this as often as he could, for example, starting letters with: 'As I am a British naturalized subject…'[7]. It is likely that Crestadoro exaggerated his claim to be a professor, and to his contemporaries he was always Italian rather than English, but who would begrudge Crestadoro such harmless gratification?

Crestadoro referred only selectively to his Italian years, perhaps because of the secret of his priesthood, and this, combined with his inventions, made him a colourful and slightly mysterious figure to his friends and colleagues.

His ideas on cataloguing and indexing were influential in the first wave of the Free Libraries, but out of date in the early twentieth century. His indexing structures were rediscovered and used by American computer scientists in the 1950s. There are occasional references to him in information science studies but he remains a footnote in this history.

Crestadoro's name crops up in railway and aeronautical history. The Impulsoria was too dramatic to vanish altogether from record and it is linked both with the original inventor, Clemente Masserano, and with Crestadoro who improved it and memorably ran it at the Great Exhibition.

Some personal glimpses of Crestadoro have survived, varying from quiet and retiring to a genial companion with a circle of friends. Staff and readers at Manchester found him invariably kind and courteous. He earned the respect and affection of some quite difficult characters, and never seems to have quarrelled with them or with the formidable Manchester Library Committee.

His wife is a mystery: her name even had three variants in census and legal documentation. Crestadoro encouraged women's employment, supported the suffragettes and in his will left money for the education of women in Genoa, so he was no Victorian patriarch.

## Sources

An obscure subject presents a challenge. I have trawled through books, articles, newspapers, letters, minutes and reports, have badgered contacts, and delved into Crestadoro's own publications, as well as visiting any place associated with him.

Digitisation enables searches to be accomplished in minutes rather than years. Crestadoro is unlikely to be cited in book indexes or to appear in many journal articles. It would be an impossible task to obtain and browse all possibilities in print. A very different matter when so much of this is now online.

Family history sites are another rich source for tracking down names that occur in relation to Crestadoro. The other transformation in research is the ability to use e-mail or to direct questions through social media or web sites. It is the modern equivalent of the paper correspondence that has always existed amongst researchers.

The Manchester Library Letter and Minute books are the primary source for the details of Crestadoro's professional life and afford some idea of his personality. Manchester was well aware of its pre-eminence as the first major Free Library and took care to preserve the documentation. Most public libraries discarded their own early correspondence and minutes or lost them through fire (Birmingham in 1879) or bombing (Liverpool on the 1941 blitz).

## The Momus interview

The *Momus*[8] article is important as the only source for Crestadoro's life written while he was alive. *Momus* was a satirical Manchester weekly, and it is fortunate that in March 1878 the King of Italy awarded Crestadoro with the Corona d'Italia, raising his profile and sparking off this piece. It was published on 20 March 1879, just eighteen days before Crestadoro's death.

The *Momus* interview is the closest we can get to Crestadoro's own voice, allowing for journalistic editing. It is odd that there is no mention of the inventions, so perhaps these were cut out to keep

the piece short. The Corona d'Italia is linked to the pamphlet on taxation reform when there are other, more likely reasons.

However, Crestadoro clearly took the opportunity to emphasise the significance of *Du Pouvoir Temporel,* asserting that this influenced both Cavour and Menabrea. The *Momus* article concludes with this passage, suggesting that Crestadoro, now nearly at the end of his life, was anxious that this should not be forgotten:

> It may not be generally known that the present solution to a mode of existence between the kingdom of Italy and a Pope enjoying sovereign honours was first suggested to Cavour by Professor CRESTADORO, in his work published in Paris in 1861, entitled 'Du Pouvoir Temporel et de la Souverainte Pontificale' and further explained by him in a private letter to Menabrea when Prime Minister.[9]

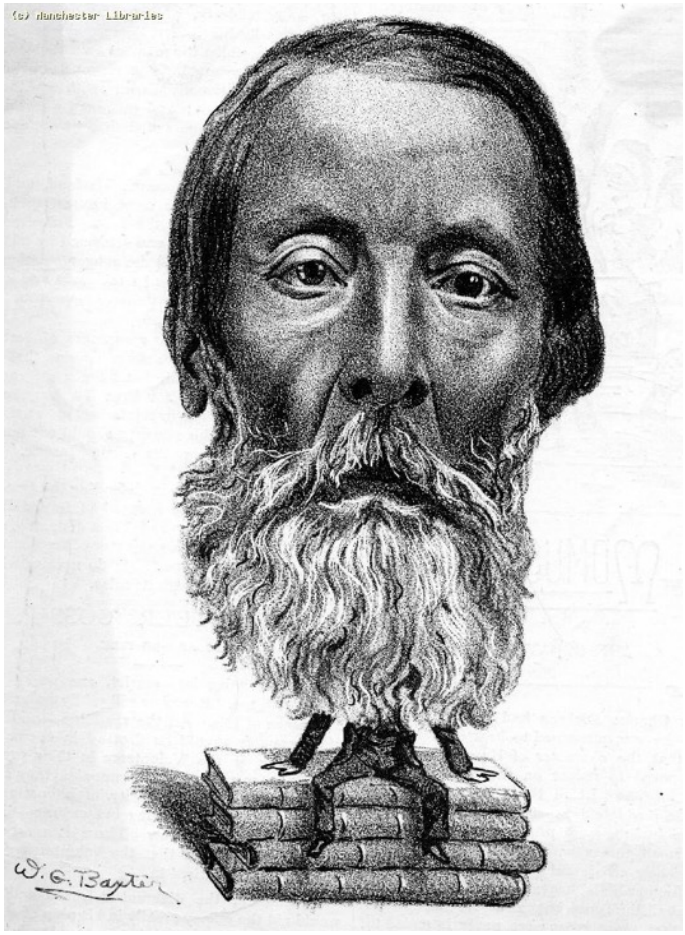


Fig.1 *Momus* Caricature of Crestadoro

## Portrait

The bonus of the *Momus* piece is the depiction of Crestadoro, a caricature picture by William Giles Baxter, architect, cartoonist, and joint editor of *Momus.* Later he was one of the Ally Sloper group, creating the first continuing comic-strip hero in Britain.

Baxter's caricature shows the long faced, beautifully bearded Caviliere Crestadoro, seated on a pile of books, gazing out with a dreamy and almost melancholy expression. He looks gentle and tired. Perhaps Baxter caught trace of the illness that was undermining him.

This is the only image of Crestadoro I have been able to trace.

Manchester had various photographic studios such as those of James Mudd and of M. Guttenberg (who photographed Crestadoro's friend, W.E.A. Axon). Crestadoro as Chief Librarian was keen to obtain portraits of eminent Manchester citizens. The purchase of 'an album to hold photographic portraits of Manchester celebrities to be kept in the Reference Library' was recorded in the Library Committee Minutes of 19 October 1870. He contacted the Photographic Rooms, 14 St Anne's Square, in search of such photographs, receiving the reply in the summer of 1871: 'I have no list of the public men of Manchester but if you inform me of the names of those you want – many thousand & can pick out without too much trouble.'[10] Yet no photograph survives of Crestadoro himself.

Was he averse to having his portrait taken? It is unlikely for one so interested in new technology. Indeed Crestadoro tried to coax Edward Edwards, the first Chief Librarian of Manchester, into

having his portrait taken, with little success judging by Edwards' response in a letter of 5 August 1873: 'Your request is a flattering one, but it is, entirely, out of my power to comply with it. I have never sat for a photograph, and it was only in the days of youthful vanity that I ever sat for a portrait of any kind. The last occasion is, I think, about thirty-five years distant.'[11]

## Azeglio Valgimigli

A unique physical description of Crestadoro surfaced in 1933 in *La Colonia Italiana di Manchester (1794-1932)* by Azeglio Valgimigli.[12] He devoted several pages to Crestadoro, acknowledging that he had drawn heavily from W.R. Credland's account in *The Manchester Free Public Libraries*[13], translated for him by the Deputy Chief Librarian, Ernest Axon (W.E.A. Axon's son).

But crucially Valgimigli had also been given a description of Crestadoro by one who had known him, the distinguished Manchester doctor and bibliophile, David Lloyd Roberts (1835-1920): 'Fifteen years ago, having asked Dr. Lloyd Roberts, now dead, a great admirer of Italian language and literature, some details about Crestadoro, he told me that he was fairly tall, dark-haired, lean, of a dignified appearance and affable manners.'

Valgimigli was impressed by Crestadoro's achievements in the Manchester Libraries, and by how fondly he was still remembered:

> To him, as a book-lover and librarian, one could apply what Manzoni said of the work of Federico Borromeo, in Promessi Sposi' (Chap XXII) 'in the rules which he established for the use and organisation of the Library (the Ambrosiana) is seen as an invention of usefulness not only fine in itself but in many ways learned and delicate far beyond the habits of the time.'

## William Edward Armitage Axon (1846-1913)

Crestadoro, scholar, bibliophile and inventor provided a role model for the young Axon, his assistant. After an unpromising start in life, Axon became a renowned man of letters and founded a dynasty of librarians at Manchester Public Libraries. This is his photograph, taken by M. Guttenberg, Ltd., of Manchester.

Fig.2 W.E.A. Axon

Axon was the illegitimate son of a Manchester clothing manufacturer, Edward Armytage, and his fifteen-year-old servant, Lydia Whitehead. Put out to nurse with a family who neglected him, Axon became frail and rickety. He probably would have died, were it not for the young daughters of the working-class Axon family who: 'fell in love with the lonely delicate boy and who persuaded their parents to take charge of him. He became one of their own and acquired their surname by repute.'[14] Too frail for school, Axon picked up his education from his adopted sisters, from the Baptist Sunday school in Hulme and from his own voracious reading.

At the age of fifteen, Axon became a library assistant in Manchester's Campfield Library. His Chief Librarian was R.W. Smiles, succeeded in 1864 by Crestadoro: 'As a youth he showed unusual taste for literature, and in 1861 found congenial employment in the service of the Manchester Free Libraries. Dr. Crestadoro, the late chief librarian, found in Mr. Axon an able and zealous helper in the work of extending the collections and making known to the public the character and scope of the books they contained.'[15]

In 1874, Axon left for a commercial post, but soon became the librarian at the *Manchester Guardian*. He was a prolific writer, contributor to many journals, an enthusiastic member of societies, campaigns, dinners and gatherings.

In 1877, Axon and Crestadoro were both appointed to the first council of the LA and Axon became an avid participant: for example, he led the campaign for the opening of the Free Libraries on Sundays, and badgered for a printed BM catalogue. Through these activities Axon kept up his association with his old Chief and mentor. There must have been trust and intimacy between them for Crestadoro confided to him unique details of his private life, including an anecdote from his childhood. Without Axon the record would be bare indeed.

Although not signed, only Axon could have written the long obituary, appearing the day after Crestadoro's death, in the 8 April 1879 issue of the *Manchester Guardian*. He referred to this as well as to other 'private information' in the *DNB* entry he contributed in 1885. Axon also included a comparatively lengthy piece on Crestadoro in his *Annals of Manchester*[16].

Along with the *Momus* interview, these are the key biographical sources for Crestadoro.

Sadly, Axon promised but never delivered an article on Crestadoro for the *Library Journal*, the joint publication of the American Library Association (ALA) and the LA.

Axon was not the only colleague who wrote of his old Chief. Crestadoro inspired several other young assistants, W.R. Credland and Charles Sutton amongst them, who later became eminent in the profession. They recorded some details of Crestadoro in various library studies but added only a little to the information in *Momus* and in Axon's accounts. There is a handful of brief recollections from other sources, some unnamed or second hand, but Axon is the main chronicler.

## *DNB*

To continue the quotation from Frank Pacy, given on the title page:

> The almost legendary Dr. Garnett was there, the almost mythical Dr. Crestadoro; William Blades, Robert Needham Cust, R.K.Douglas, W.S. Jevons, Stirling Maxwell, Henry Morley, Mark Pattison, Bernard Quaritch; name after name has earned place in our Valhalla, 'The Dictionary of National Biography.' How many of us, I wonder, will attain that degree of immortality?[17]

Frank Pacy, the secretary of the LA, was clear that prominent librarians would expect to be remembered in the *DNB*. Out of those he lists, only R.K. Douglas and, ironically, Frank Pacy himself, were excluded, despite Pacy being a colourful and influential character on the scene.[18] Mark Curthoys, an editor of the modern *DNB*, confirmed that there is good coverage of librarians as the: '*DNB* was contemporary with the free library movement, and so had strong connections with it.'[19]

Three factors would have been in Crestadoro's favour for inclusion in the *DNB*. He was an author, he was a pioneering chief librarian, and he was known to Axon, a valued contributor. The question

remains open as to whether it was Axon who ensured Crestadoro's presence there or whether Crestadoro would have been prominent enough to have an entry on his own merits. Did Axon have the remit to select his subjects for *DNB* or was Crestadoro was already on the list and Axon the obvious choice to write about him? (Altogether Axon produced fifty-four *DNB* entries). If, six years after his death, Crestadoro was selected independently of Axon, that suggests he was still regarded as fairly prominent.

Crestadoro was also included in Frederic Boase's ambitious *Modern English Biography*[20] of 1892. Boase provided brief biographies of 30,000 people who died between 1851 and 1900. According to the preface of the first edition, he selected 'anyone who has been well known and about whom a question might arise in general conversation.' His source was probably the *Momus* article. Boase's coverage was odd – but he did like librarians.

## Tracing Librarians

The *DNB* now covers nearly 60,000 biographies of people from British history. This multitude of both major and minor figures enables the researcher to construct a person's networks of contacts.

Librarians can follow their professional history through the *DNB*. Liz Chapman explored the word 'librarian' and pulled up some 1,007 entries. She wrote entertainingly of their strange lives in an article in *CILIP Update*.[21]

Of all the librarians listed, only about forty were solely librarians. The other occupations include writer, antiquary scholar, bibliographer, religious controversialist, Romani scholar, botanist, courtier, palaeographer, physician, printer, museum director, poet, actor, and art dealer. This is not surprising, for the profession only properly evolved in the late nineteenth century.

In addition to *DNB* and Boase, two other useful sources for identifying the librarians contemporary with Crestadoro are W.A. Munford's *Who was Who in British Librarianship 1800-1895*[22] and Alfred Cotgreave's *Views and Memoranda of Public Libraries*[23].

## Lost Sources

The publisher archives for Sampson Low were lost in the bombardment of London in December 1940. The whole of Paternoster Row, heart of the book trade, was destroyed; whilst next to it St. Paul's miraculously survived.

The photographs in the LA archive have disappeared, the Salford library archives with correspondence between Crestadoro and the librarian John Plant closed in recent years for lack of funding.

Crestadoro's solicitor William Shaen was an important figure in the Italian community. I tracked down the descendant of his firm, now Shaen Roscoe & Swift in Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, and received a courteous reply from Mr. Swift to the effect that any surviving papers would have been disposed of in the 1970s after the move from London.

Thomas Greenwood (1851-1908), librarian, writer and publisher, destroyed the archive that would almost certainly have contained letters from Crestadoro and his friends:

> I had a large locker and a number of boxes full of papers and correspondence. My eyes were then giving me trouble, and I simply dared not attempt to sort these papers, and my gardener made a big bonfire and the memory of that bonfire remains today. There were, among the batches destroyed, papers and other documents that I wish I had now in my possession.[24]

Family history sources in Italy are not easy to engage. Sir James Hudson's widow burnt the papers of Sir James Hudson, the British diplomat, who may well have known Crestadoro in Turin.

## Outcome

The quest for Crestadoro illuminated my working life. I newly appreciated the value of each element of catalogue records and of the structures that linked them. In-depth and accurate records are essential in tracking down elusive scraps of information. Crestadoro's trade was designing such catalogues and indexes for all readers.

For two decades I followed Crestadoro into widely differing circles: the Italian Risorgimento, economics, a host of inventions, the Free Libraries and his visions of universal knowledge and improvement.

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[4] CUSTOS VERITAS, 'Letters on our affairs, *The Library World*, XXIV (July 1921-June 1922) pp. 33-35

[5] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, Various eds.1885-1990, print and online from 1990)

[6] 'Our Album. A. Crestadoro Esq. Temple of Fame', *Momus* (20 March 1879)

[7] British Library, London (hereafter BL), London, MS52484, Andrea Crestadoro to E.C. Jones, May 1867

[8] 'A. Crestadoro', *Momus*

[9] 'A. Crestadoro', *Momus*

[10] Manchester Archives and Local Studies (MA hereafter) Letter 35/71

[11] Greenwood, Thomas, *Edward Edwards The Chief Pioneer of Municipal Public Libraries* (London: Scott, Greenwood, 1902)

[12] Azeglio Valgimigli, *La Colonia Italiana di Manchester (1794-1932)* (Firenze: Ariani, 1932)

[13] W. R. Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries: a history and description, and guide to their contents and use* (Manchester: Free Libraries Committee, 1899)

[14] R. Walmsley, 'Dr Axon - Manchester bookman', *Manchester Review*, Summer-Autumn (1964)

[15] *Manchester Faces and Places. An illustrated record of the social, political, and commercial life of the cotton metropolis and its environs*, 3 (1892) p.109

[16] W. E. A. Axon (ed.) *The Annals of Manchester: a chronological record from the earliest times to the end of 1885* (Manchester: Heywood, 1886)

[17] Pacy, 'The LA: early days', p.53

[18] Ernest A. Savage, *A Librarian's memories: Portraits and Reflections* (London: Grafton, 1952)

[19] Mark Curthoys, e-mail to author, 6 October 2006

[20] Frederic Boase, *Modern English biography : containing many thousand concise memoirs of persons who have died since the year 1850* (Truro, Netherton and Worth, 1892)

[21] Liz Chapman, 'Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Librarians' lives', *CILIP Update*, July 2003

[22] W.A.Munford, *Who Was Who in British Librarianship 1800-1985: A Dictionary of Dates with Notes* (London: LA, 1987)

[23] Alfred Cotgreave, *Views and Memoranda of Public Libraries* (London: Library Aids, 1901)

[24] Grace Carlton, *Spade-work: the story of Thomas Greenwood* (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1949) p.142

# Chapter Two: So here is an Italian, a Genoese

> So here is an Italian, I mean a Genoese, who got used to the fogs of Manchester and in the fogs of Manchester spent the best years of his life and died. Was he maybe a hero?[25]

## Child

Crestadoro's life in Italy falls into three clusters: his childhood in Genoa, his studies at the University of Turin, and his connection with the invention that brought him to England. Crestadoro was reticent about his years in Italy, and the information is scant.

He was born in one of the oldest districts of Genoa, Sestiere di Portoria, now part of the historic centre. His parents were Giambattisa and Maria Antonia and he had at least three brothers, Bernardino, Carlo and Pietro.

Crestadoro recorded his father's name as John Baptista Crestadoro on his marriage certificate of 17 March 1864, with no more description than 'dead' under Rank/Profession. John Baptista is the English equivalent of Giambattisa, a name common in Genoa in honour of their patron saint: 'Thus, in Genoa, as the onomastically alert Dickens was aware, "great numbers of the common people are christened Giovanni Baptista, which latter name is pronounced in the Genoese patois Batcheetcha, like a sneeze."'[26]

Crestadoro gave his birth date as 1808. There is only one anecdote of Crestadoro's childhood, in the *Manchester Guardian* obituary, which reads as if Crestadoro had recounted the tale more than once to Axon, suggesting it was a matter of great pride. Crestadoro was clearly destined to be a swot:

> The late Andrea Crestadoro was born at Genoa in 1808, and was educated at the Grammar School of that place. One of the incidents of his student days illustrates the strength and

> persistence of character he always displayed. For one of the prizes he was marked as proxime accessit, and the rector, in making the adjudication, forgot that wise counsel which enjoins judges not to give reasons for their decisions, and remarked that the essay by Crestadoro was as a whole by far the best, but had been placed second in position as it contained one phrase so barbarous that it outweighed all the good qualities of the theme. The young student immediately set to work, and ransacked the ancient authors to be found in the fine public library of the city, and at last found the much-abused form of expression in the classic pages of Cicero. The consternation of the rector may be imagined as this enfant terrible triumphantly produced it and claimed the prize.

## Genus Loci

What sort of city did Crestadoro grown up in?

Genoa is a city of contradictions, named indeed after the two-faced god, Janus, for it looks both outwards to the sea and inwards to the mountains and to the great European forest beyond, that stretches across the top of Italy down to the Camargue. It is a city of breath-taking heights, packed between two mountain spurs that flatten out into the sea, with a frontier of ships, harbours, jetties and landing wharves. Enfolded labyrinths of narrow alleyways plunge steeply down to the sea.

From Roman times onwards the city had the reputation of being fiercely independent. With its republican spirit, centuries of adventuring, war and manipulation of foreign rulers Genoa was destined to be at the centre of the Risorgimento.

As well as its republican spirit, Genoa was renowned as a trading centre with close ties over the centuries with England. The red cross of St. George's flag, incorporated into the Union Jack, was adopted in 1190 by the City of London, enabling the protection of the Genoese fleet, for which they paid an annual tribute.

I have read many accounts of Genoa but it was only on visiting the city that I understood how it fairly crackles with adventure. This is, after all, the city of Columbus. Motorways carve up the city, there is a wilderness of bridges, tunnels, traffic, tower blocks and peeling buildings but Genoa is vibrant. The aerial routes pour in from Venice, Eastern Europe, Turin and the Alps and down to the south and the great ships dominate the horizon. It no longer puzzled me that Crestadoro set out on his venture in his middle years.

## Growing up in Genoa

Crestadoro probably came from an ordinary working family but the city gave him education, a context of commerce, libraries, languages, travel and even science, in the presence of the great museum. The remarkable James Smithson, posthumous founder of the Washington Smithsonian, was drawn to the scientific community of Genoa and to these attractions: 'an excellent museum of natural history, a large mineral collection, and a botanical garden; and at the university the first chemistry professorship had been held by the English physician William Batt, a man Smithson had known back in his Grand Tour days.'[27]

Perhaps the prevalence of English visitors aroused Crestadoro's curiosity about their democratic country, so different from the stifling and policed world he knew. Though perhaps not as vehemently as one Genovean, Perrini, who declared: 'He would rather be dead in England than alive in any other country.'[28]

Charles Dickens resided in Genoa for a few months in 1844 and described it as obscenely priest ridden:

> Every fourth or fifth man in the streets is a Priest or a Monk; and there is pretty sure to be at least one itinerant ecclesiastic inside or outside every hackney carriage on the neighbouring roads. I have no knowledge, elsewhere, of more repulsive countenances than are to be found among these gentry. If Nature's handwriting be at all legible, greater varieties of sloth, deceit and intellectual torpor, could hardly be observed among any class of men in the world.[29]

Economics, science and the priesthood were all aspects of Genoa that were reflected in Crestadoro's life.

## Turbulent Times

Crestadoro lived through a roller coaster of history with waves upon wave of conflict and oppression. He was born a citizen of the French Empire: Napoleon had literally crowned himself king of Italy in 1805. After the collapse of Napoleon's empire in 1814, Genoa became part of the kingdom of Piedmont, ruled by the Savoys but under Austrian control. By seven years old, Crestadoro had switched from citizen of the French Empire to being a subject of the curmudgeonly King Victor Emmanuel I. The French reforms were swept away, ecclesiastical and noble privileges restored. The church controlled education.

Crestadoro would have been at school in 1820 when troubles broke out across Italy, and he would have experienced the oppressive aftermath. Piedmont was loyal to the King but demanded a constitution and war on Austria. Victor Emmanuel I refused and abdicated. Charles Albert as regent agreed to the constitution but his cousin, Charles Felix, a strong reactionary, soon took the crown and disowned the constitution. By the early autumn of 1830, Charles Felix gave orders for a crackdown on liberals, aimed particularly at Genoa. On Charles Felix's death in 1831, Charles Albert succeeded to the throne of Piedmont. He was no despot but he became obsessively religious and exacted harsh punishments for the conspirators of a military coup in 1833. Gradually he was forced to allow more liberal laws and some modernisation.

1848 was the year of revolution and uprisings across Europe and Latin America. By March, Crestadoro was in Paris and escaped the terrible aftermath in Italy.

Cavour had urged Charles Albert to lead Piedmont into campaigns against the Austrians, and he was easily defeated at Novara in 1849. He handed over the monarchy of Sardinia-Piedmont to his son, Victor Emmanuel II. After signing a peace treaty with the Austrians Victor Emmanuel turned on the rebels in Genoa, and at his command General La Marmora brutally suppressed the revolt. Civilians were targeted in heavy bombing, and the soldiers unleashed upon them. April 1849 was a tragic period of Genoa's history.

In 1852, Victor Emmanuel appointed Cavour as Prime Minister of Piedmont, and thereafter allied himself to the Risorgimento. As an Italian citizen, though living in England, Crestadoro was now subject to the only Piedmont monarch who remained true to his constitutional vows, fought for unification, and in 1861 became the first King of Italy. (In England he is remembered as a horse lover. The Bull Hotel in Woodbridge displays the Royal Arms of Piedmont and Savoy, for Victor Emmanuel stayed there as a customer of the owner, John Grout, the famous horse breeder.)[30]

Before he left Italy in 1848, Crestadoro had lived under periods of stagnation and torpor punctuated by unrest and climatic events. He had experienced three reigns and one regency whilst a subject of Piedmont. As an English citizen Crestadoro just outlived Victor Emmanuel II and it was a fourth king, Umberto I, who presented him with the Corona d'Italia.

## His brother Bernardino

Bernardino Crestadoro, born in 1804, found fame as a Scolopian or Piarist priest. By all accounts he was a fiercely principled and self-sacrificing man, disliked by the authorities and the Catholic hierarchy, but loved by his people. He entered the Piarist order in 1820, took his vows in the following year, and was so valued that he was sent to establish a new Piarist school and establishment in Ovada. But as the *Archivio biografia Italiano*[31] relates: 'Unfortunately a serious illness which was of a nervous nature forced him to follow doctor's orders and he had to leave the school and became a priest of the secular order (an ordinary priest).'

When cholera struck Ovada in 1836, Bernardino stripped his house bare, giving everything he had to alleviate the suffering. In 1840 he interrupted a bicentennial ceremony at the Church of N. S. Conception with an impassioned plea for a hospital and a kindergarten school. He denounced the filthy old hospital in colourful terms.

This speech was later published in the radical *Popular Reading* on 26 September 1840. The rhetoric of Bernardino's daring sermon is reminiscent of Andrea Crestadoro's style in its mix of details and principles and he was shockingly blunt on the fate that awaits these abandoned children: and on the choices the comfortable rich have to make.[32] He ended up in trouble with the church but won the votes: the hospital was built in 1867 and the school in 1870. He is still remembered for this heroism. A recent article in *URBS*[33], commemorating the role of the town of Ovada in the unification of Italy, related again his 1840 denouncement.

Returning to Genoa, Bernardino preached at the main church of S. Stefano, attracting a great following. For the next twenty-five years he was the beloved rector of S. Martino in Pegli, dying in 1871.

On my visit to Genoa, I took the train along the coast to Pegli, and found the formidable church of S. Martino on the hill high above the town, close to the woods that hide ancient Ligurian settlements. I tried to talk to the priest there but he seemed hostile. I could glimpse busts of priests as he bolted down a corridor, but I was not allowed to linger. Still, I had followed Crestadoro's footsteps a little further. It is surely likely that Crestadoro visited his remarkable brother in Pegli.

## Crestadoro – Sacerdote

At the age of eighteen, Crestadoro followed his brother into priesthood. Julio Cesar Boffano of the Generia Cura of the Piarist Fathers sent me this information together with a copy of the vows: 'However, we do know that in June 1821 Bernardino Crestadoro made his solemn profession as a Piarist and that on 19th September 1826, Andrea Crestadoro likewise made his solemn profession as a member of the Piarist Order.'

Joining the Piarist order enabled Crestadoro to develop as an inventor. Piarists are primarily associated with service to the poor, with education, science and technology.

The order was founded in 1617 to provide schools for poor children. Piarists became pre-eminent in education, teaching liberal arts and sciences at an elementary and then at a higher level to the poor. Their reputation increasingly attracted pupils from the middle classes and nobility. Piarists produced their own textbooks. They supported Galileo (which brought them into trouble), conversed with Franklin on electricity, developed the internal combustion engine and, even now, are regarded as the progressive academic element of the Catholic Church. Lists of famous Piarists include mathematicians, physicists and astronomers.

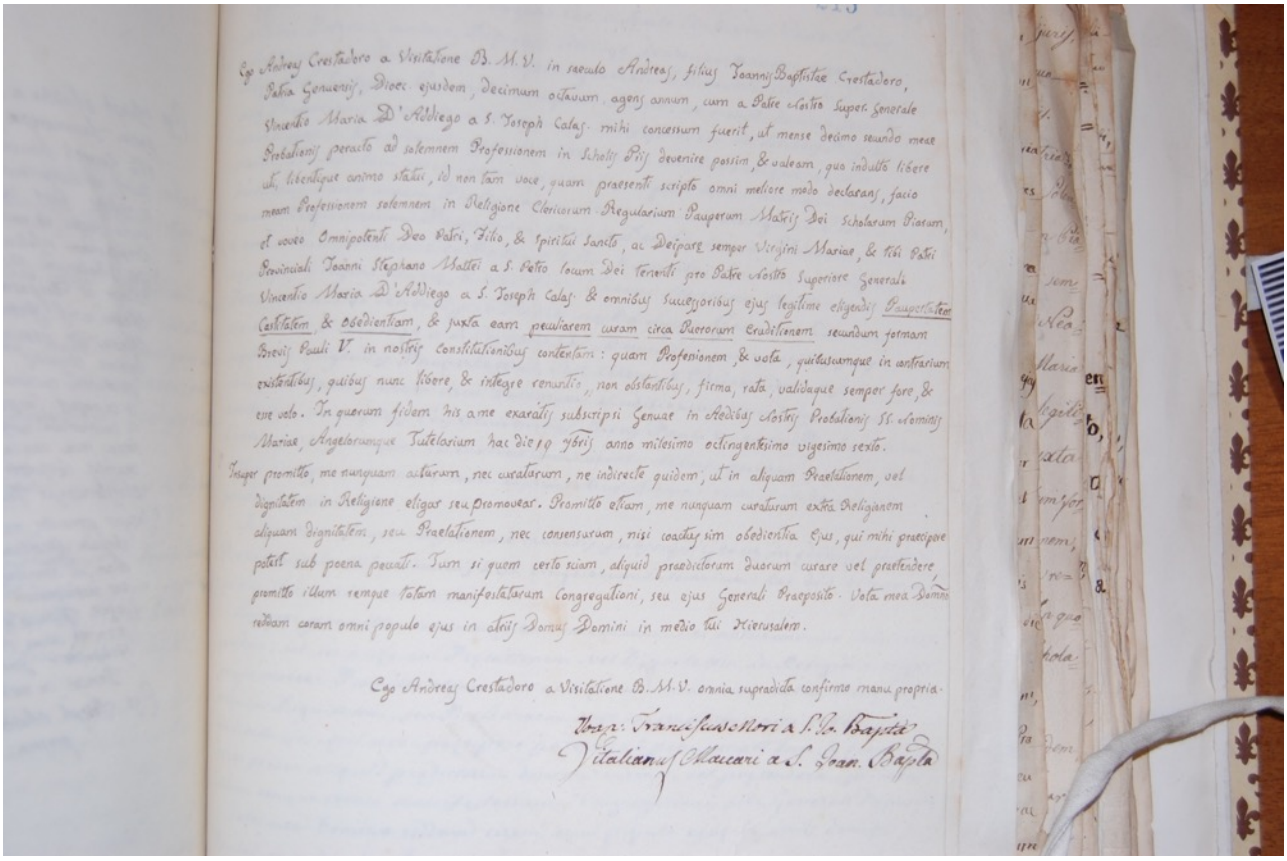


Fig.3 Piarist Certificate: Crestadoro's Vows

The Piarists spread education and opportunity for the poor across Europe, but their aims caused conflict with the Jesuits. Their emphasis on teaching arithmetic, a discipline the Jesuits abhorred, was intended to enable the poor to have marketable skills, especially in mercantile centres such as Genoa, Florence and Venice and this led ultimately into the Piarist involvement with the sciences. The Pious Schools became models for several European state systems but never had any presence in England. By following his brother into the Piarist order Crestadoro would have found opportunity to develop his scientific interests.

Paola Novaria, the Archivist at the University of Turin, was the first to discover that Crestadoro was a priest. It was Crestadoro's graduation certificate that gave the clue:

'Anyway, I've found some, maybe important, information about him. From February to December 1844 he passed exams at Turin University and finally graduated as 'professore di filosofia rationale'. Another interesting thing is he is called "sacerdote", i.e. priest.'[34] She added that 'sacerdote' would indicate a working priest.

There are no accounts of Andrea Crestadoro being prominent himself as a priest but there are references that suggest he was respected. In 1845 Vittorio Angiis reviewed Crestadoro's work on saving banks and refers to him as: 'L'esimio sacerdote A. Crestadoro'.[35]

## Layman

Crestadoro was still openly a priest when he was with the Impulsoria syndicate in Paris in 1848: he was recorded in the registration of the patent as 'don Andre Crestadoro'.[36] He cast aside the role and presumably the garments of a priest in crossing the Channel in 1849. Together with Masserano, he sailed from Ostend on the *Undine* and on landing at Dover on 30 May he was simply recorded on

the Alien Arrivals HO 2 record (Certificate 1937) as Andrea Crestadoro, and so he remained for the rest of his life. (Another List of Aliens, HO 3, recorded him wrongly as Crestadore for the same landing, one of many misinterpretations of his name).

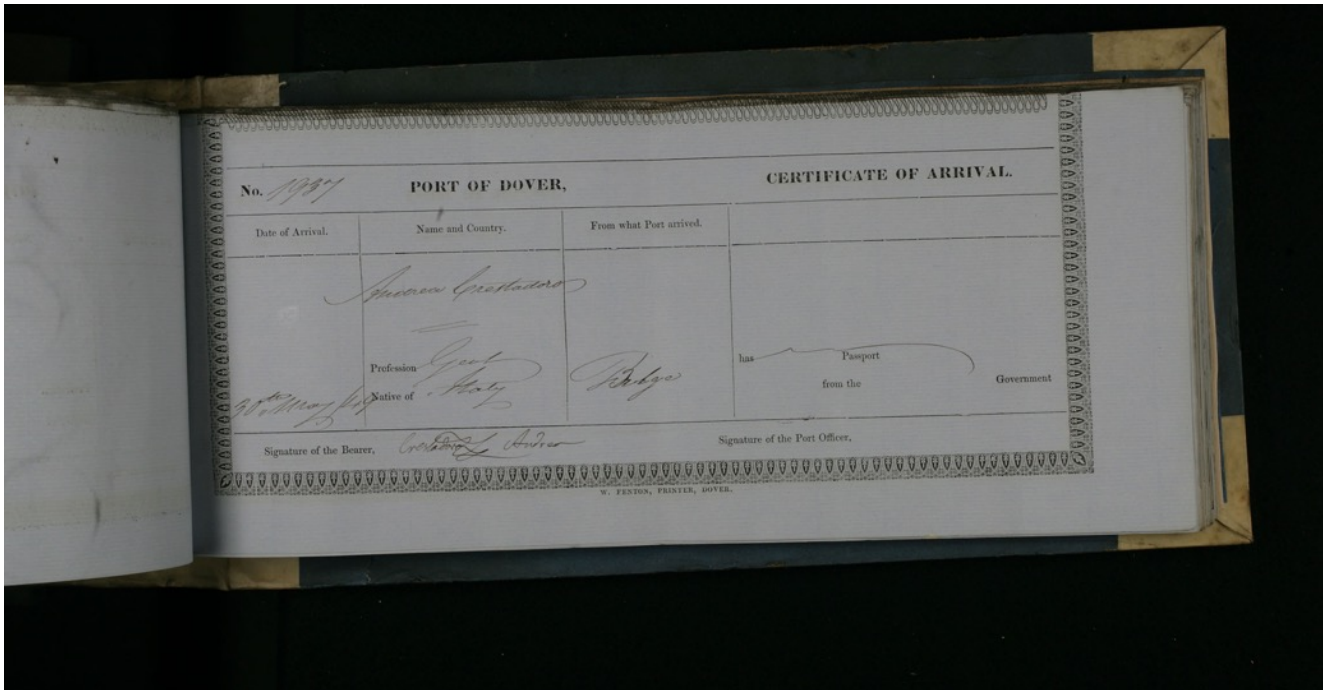



Fig.4 Alien Landing Certificate

Crestadoro apparently kept his priesthood a complete secret from his English friends. This was understandable, given the hostility towards Catholics. If he did confide, they were sworn to silence. Nothing in Crestadoro's recorded life in England has given a hint of this startling past. His marriage in 1864 took place at the Anglican Old Church St Pancras, London, where his wife's family had connections as churchwardens.

However, the priesthood is not easily shed. The Piarists I contacted did not mention he had left the order, implying he had not applied for release.

The online *Catholic Exchange* discussed the question 'Can a Priest Ever Return to the Lay State?' The answer is apparently not: a laicized priest is one who has received release from the clerical state but he still remains technically a priest, and marriage would be invalid. It looks as if Crestadoro belonged to an even worse category: 'Some priests have simply walked away from the Catholic Church entirely, and have married outside the Church without obtaining (or often without even seeking) permission from their superiors. While individual circumstances can vary, their status is often akin to that of a soldier who has gone "AWOL".'[37]

Crestadoro led a busy life as a layman, concealed his discarded priesthood, wrote his study of papal temporal power, and believed in the goodness of a creator. The values he saw and cherished in English society were freedom, democracy, humanity and kindness. The only reference to his years of teaching, his occupation in the priesthood, is in his treatise on grammar: and this contains the word 'drudgery'.

## Crestadoro's contemporary in Genoa: Giuseppe Mazzini

Genoa provided a fitting birthplace for Mazzini, arch-conspirator and propagandist of the Risorgimento. There are divided opinions on every aspect of the Risorgimento and its aftermath,

but it is generally accepted that the three main architects of the new Italy were the politician Cavour, the conspirator Mazzini and the warrior Garibaldi. Some would include Victor Emmanuel II in his uneasy relationships with Cavour and Garibaldi. But the anti-monarchist Mazzini was beyond the pale to Victor Emmanuel II.

Mazzini was born in 1805 into to a world of conspiracy. His father was an active politician and a Ligurian Jacobin; whilst his mother was a passionate but unorthodox Catholic who believed 'that her only son had been sent by God to raise humanity to new heights.'[38] Mazzini, and his friend from another liberal family, Jacopo Ruffini, attended the Royal College of Genoa, a well-known boys' school with a distinctive uniform of cocked hat, blue breeches and blue dress coats with gilt buttons bearing the name of the college. Ruffini died in prison in 1833, a Risorgimento martyr. Was this the school Crestadoro attended, the one he referred to as a grammar school?

In 1821, Mazzini was a student at the University of Genoa and was powerfully affected by his encounter with the fugitive rebels on the quayside of Genoa: 'I childishly determined to dress always in black, imagining myself in mourning for my country. Matters went so far that my poor mother became terrified in case I should commit suicide.'[39]

There is no record of how the thirteen-year-old Crestadoro and his family reacted to these traumatic events, though his liberal sympathies were probably engaged.

Mazzini joined the outlawed Carbonari in Genoa in his last year at university. After ten weeks in prison in 1830 he went into exile. And a year later, as leader of the exiles in Marseilles, he founded Giovine Italia, Young Italy, the movement that laid the intellectual and emotional foundation of the Risorgimento.

Mazzini and Crestadoro had some contact through a mutual friend, William Shaen, when they were both in London in 1859. But this does not provide evidence either way on whether they had any association as children in Genoa.

## Remembered in Genoa

Crestadoro is remembered in Italy in the context of library history and cataloguing theory. I hoped there might be some acknowledgement in his native city, but he is not even listed in collected biographies of famous citizens of Genoa. Apart from having some of his books in their collections, there is no trace of him in the city libraries and archives.

However, the eminent scholar Alfredo Obertello published an article on Crestadoro, *Genovesi nel Mondo Andrea Crestadoro* in the *Giornale di Genova*, 16 June 1932[40].

Obertello had been appalled by his experience of visiting Manchester in 1932, encountering the notorious fogs of the city. On his departure, a friend thrust a copy of Azeglio Valgimigli's newly published work, *La Colonia Italiana di Manchester*[41], into his hands. From all the Italians discussed in this work, Obertello focused on a fellow Ligurian, Crestadoro. He applauded Crestadoro's heroism in adventuring to England, in persisting with his inventions and most of all in living for long years in the fog-ridden outposts of the north. He made fanciful play on Crestadoro's name and concluded that it was one worthy of such a distinguished scholar:

> Crestadoro is one of the compounded names which are frequently found in Genoa and even more common in Liguria on the two Rivieras. It can make one smile at first, because the first image it brings to mind is that of a rooster with an immense crest, very arrogant, always crowing, never tired of parading amongst a group of humble hens. But if you apply

> it to our Andrea (another beautiful name of antique origins) you have to admit that one could hardly have given him a more comprehensive surname. Cresta d'oro (Golden crest; because men, contrary to roosters are judged by their heart, if you substitute one word for the other, you will find that Cuore d'oro (Golden heart) is the most beautiful surname that a real gentleman deserves to have.[42]

There is satisfaction in knowing that a fellow scholar and countryman belatedly commemorated Crestadoro in Genoa. Firmly settled as he was in England, Crestadoro did not forget his native city.

## Crestadoro in Turin

I visited Genoa and Turin to appreciate where Crestadoro came from and what might have formed him. Turin is famed as a city of commerce and imposing architecture. The orderly squares and streets of eighteenth-century reorganisation make walking a sublime experience. Treading the miles of lofty sheltered pavements, the arcades supposedly built to keep the rain off the royal family as they shopped, is totally different from wandering the alleyways of Genoa. In its sombre mix of magnificence and industry, Turin must have prepared Crestadoro for London and Manchester.

Both Crestadoro's birthplace, and Turin where he went to university, were major centres of the Risorgimento political struggles, although Turin was a much more repressed and restricted society than turbulent Genoa.

From the 1840s onwards, there was anxiety that Italy was lagging behind the great industrial nations and awareness that changes were inevitable. Despite the stifling society, rigid censorship and the suppressions of the church, Turin became a centre for the silent conspiracy of Piedmont, modernisation and progress. In 1844, Charles Albert commissioned a railway line to connect Genoa and Turin. This opened in 1853, fostering unification as Turin was the seat of Cavour's enterprises.

Crestadoro's English friends were aware that in the 1840s he wrote a grammatical text, a treatise on savings banks, and translated part of George Bancroft's *History of the United States of America* into Italian. Such apparently innocuous subjects were part and parcel of the movement towards modernisation, nationalism and independence.

## Information

Journals, conferences and networking characterised the new world of science and technology. Isolated and broken into tyrannised states, Italy desperately needed the lifeblood of this information. From the late 1830s onwards, journals sprang up in all the major cities, focusing on the economic, cultural and technical conditions of the peninsula. Academics, landowners, intellectuals, patriots and scientists were launched into an exciting climate of debate and change. In 1839, the annual congresses of Italian scientists were implemented, similar to the patterns of the British and German scientific communities. As Christopher Duggan describes:

> The first congress was held in Pisa with the blessing of Grand Duke Leopold, and attracted a great deal of hostility (the Pope banned his subjects from participating): only 421 scientists turned up, of whom about half were from Tuscany itself. But the ensuing congresses in Turin, Florence, Padua, Lucca, Milan and Naples were much better attended, with a peak of 1,613 registrations in 1845.[43]

The new phenomena of the World Fairs were also a factor in Italy's progression towards nationalism, modernization, and industrialization. Cristina Della Coletta in *World's Fairs Italian Style* describes the critical role Turin played from the start. Since 1829 regular exhibitions had been

held in Turin but focused mainly on products for the rich and foreign goods:

> The 1850 and 1858 expositions brought the machine to the forefront, thus marking the beginning of Turin's industrial take-off . The program of industrial leadership that Piedmont's entrepreneurial elite staged with their 1850 exposition reaped significant international rewards in the great exhibitions of London (1851) and Paris (1855).

The catalogues of the international exhibitions reached a huge public, promulgating: 'the culture of abundance, endless possibility, and unlimited self-fulfillment that these fairs promoted.'[44] A symbiotic relationship developed between industrial progress, invention and those who generated and controlled information. This presented a natural evolution for someone like Crestadoro, who adapted his priestly and scholarly skills into invention and then later into expert provision of information. It is also in this new environment that he became involved with Clemente Masserano and the Impulsoria syndicate.

## Student

The University of Turin is one of the oldest in Europe. Founded in 1407, it has a distinguished history through the centuries in theology, medicine, veterinary science and natural philosophy. Both before and after secularisation in the eighteenth century, priests were prominent as teachers at the University. The University of Turin has a roll call of famous names, clerical and secular. In 1843, the *Saturday Magazine* ran a laudatory feature: 'The University of Turin is a magnificent and celebrated building. The number of students amounts to more than 2000 and among the professors have been reckoned some of the most learned men of Europe.'[45]

This article was written around the time when Crestadoro was at the University. Amongst the learned men he may have known in his sporadic career there, were Giovanni Plana (1781-1864), astronomer and mathematical physicist, Amedeo Avogadro (1776-1856), eminent in chemistry, mathematics and structure of matter, Giuseppe Domenico Botto (1791-1865), famed for experimental electricity. However, even the eminent were subjected to scrutiny for any political involvement in the 1821 student uprising.

Federico Luigi Menabrea, later a general and statesman, trained as an engineer and mathematician at the University of Turin in the 1830s where he became a professor. Charles Babbage presented his Analytical Engine to a group of scientists at the University of Turin in 1840: Menabrea's subsequent notes on the principles of the Analytical Engine were famously translated into English by Ada Lovelace and are regarded as the first outline of computer programming. Crestadoro may at least have been acquainted with Menabrea, whom he claimed he influenced (along with Cavour) with his work on temporal power. There were visiting scholars, amongst them James Prescott Joule from the wealthy brewing family in Salford, later famous as a physicist. Even if they were unacquainted in Turin, Joule would surely have later known Crestadoro in Manchester. Joule served on the first Manchester Free Libraries Committee and though not actively involved by Crestadoro's time there, was likely to have kept up his interest.

Crestadoro moved at some stage to the University of Turin but there is no account of how exact time he spent there. His publications indicate he was there in the 1840s when progress was being pushed in Piedmont, led by key scientists at the University**:** 'those were exciting years for the experimental sciences and for mathematics and the scientific milieu of the University of Turin was at a very high level.'[46]

I visited Paola Novaria at the University of Turin. The Archivio Storico dell'Universita di Torino is

in the heart of the eighteenth century university buildings, within a secluded courtyard, which contains the historic library I was also privileged to visit. I imagine all this is largely unchanged from when Crestadoro was a student there. On the upper balcony levels above the courtyard there is an impressive array of busts of the great professors, several indicating Turin's prominence in science and medicine.

## Graduation

It took Crestadoro two attempts to graduate between February and December 1844, much later in life than usual. There were mitigating circumstances. The political unrest resulted in the University being closed down between 1830 and 1832, and provincial students had to be taught and examined at home as a measure to limit their involvement. Under Charles Albert, the University opened up again and became liberalised. In 1845, there was reorganisation and revival with a new curriculum. Given the scale of disruption that the University suffered, the occasions when the Church prevented priests from studying and the dispersal of studies away from Turin, it is not surprising that Crestadoro took so long to graduate or started later in life than usual.

I am indebted to Paola Novaria for tracking down his graduation certificates. It is difficult to interpret these as some printed words have been crossed out and handwritten notes added. It appears that Crestadoro had at first failed an examination and then passed it as a re-sit. The certificates relate to two Faculties, one of Science and one of Rational Philosophy.

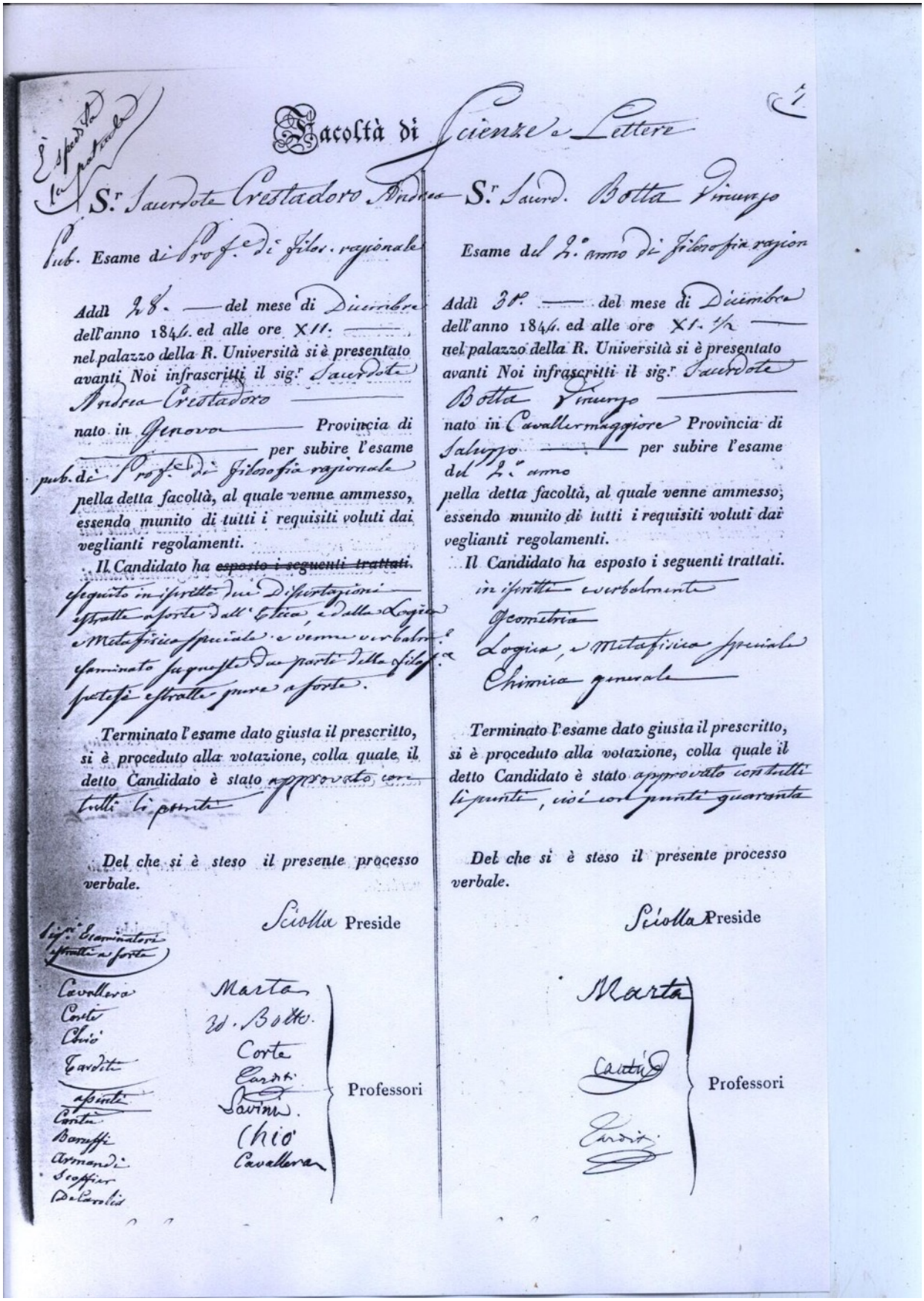
## Professor

Crestadoro endowed himself with the title of professor or doctor in England, declaring he had been Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of Turin. Crestadoro's claims are likely to be exaggerated. The appointed professors were such distinguished scientists at the University of Turin that it is highly unlikely Crestadoro held an actual chair, though he may have been a tutor. There is no evidence of a rapid promotion to the status of professor. However, as the records were disrupted in this period, the exact nature of Crestadoro's professorship remains inconclusive.

With the grand title of 'Professor of Natural Philosophy', Crestadoro was reverting to an encompassing term that generally dropped out of use in the University of Turin in the seventeenth century, being gradually replaced by more focused disciplinary terms, Forensic Medicine, Italian Rhetoric, Obstetrics, Physics.

By his use of the term, Crestadoro asserted he had knowledge of the laws of nature, logic, and metaphysics with links to physics, the new scientific method, as well as immersion in ancient Greek philosophy. (William Whewell coined the term scientist in 1834, and gradually modern science replaced natural philosophy as an approach, though apparently there are still chairs in Natural Philosophy in some European universities.)

Crestadoro, combining technical and scientific tinkering with his classical and bibliographical scholarship, would have convinced as a Professor of Natural Philosophy in Manchester, whether or not he really obtained this elevation. No one would have been quite sure what the term covered but Crestadoro was unassailably a man of wide learning, and Turin was a long way away. The Manchester officials, councillors and library staff tended to address Crestadoro as Dr. or Mr. on a day-to-day basis. His publications, letters to important correspondents, the *Momus* article, and the obituaries refer to his being a Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of Turin but the probability is that this is one of Crestadoro's 'improvements' on his hard-won degree in a mix of geometry, general chemistry, logic, mathematics and higher metaphysics.



Facoltà di Scienze e Lettere

1a Esperienza

S.r Sacerdote Crestadoro Andrea

Sub. Esame di Prof.e di Filos. razionale

Addì 28. — del mese di Dicembre dell'anno 1846. ed alle ore XII. — nel palazzo della R. Università si è presentato avanti Noi infrascritti il sig.r Sacerdote Andrea Crestadoro — nato in Genova — Provincia di — per subire l'esame pub. di Prof.e di Filosofia razionale nella detta facoltà, al quale venne ammesso, essendo munito di tutti i requisiti voluti dai veglianti regolamenti.

Il Candidato ha ~~esposto i seguenti trattati~~. seguito in iscritto due dissertazioni estratte a sorte dall'Etica, e dalla Logica e Metafisica speciale e venne verbalm.e esaminato su questi due punti della filos.a pratica estratti pure a sorte.

Terminato l'esame dato giusta il prescritto, si è proceduto alla votazione, colla quale il detto Candidato è stato approvato con tutti li punti

Del che si è steso il presente processo verbale.

Sciolla Preside

Sig.ri Esaminatori estratti a sorte

Professori: Cavallera, Corte, Chio', Tardite, Canta, Bonuffi, Armandi, Scoffier, De Carolis — Marta, V. Botto, Corte, Tardite, Savino, Chio', Cavallera

S.r Sacerd. Botta Vincenzo

Esame del 2.° anno di Filosofia razion.

Addì 31.° — del mese di Dicembre dell'anno 1846. ed alle ore XI. 1/2 — nel palazzo della R. Università si è presentato avanti Noi infrascritti il sig.r Sacerdote Botta Vincenzo — nato in Cavallermaggiore Provincia di Saluzzo — per subire l'esame del 2.° anno nella detta facoltà, al quale venne ammesso, essendo munito di tutti i requisiti voluti dai veglianti regolamenti.

Il Candidato ha esposto i seguenti trattati. in iscritto e verbalmente Geometria Logica, e Metafisica speciale Chimica generale

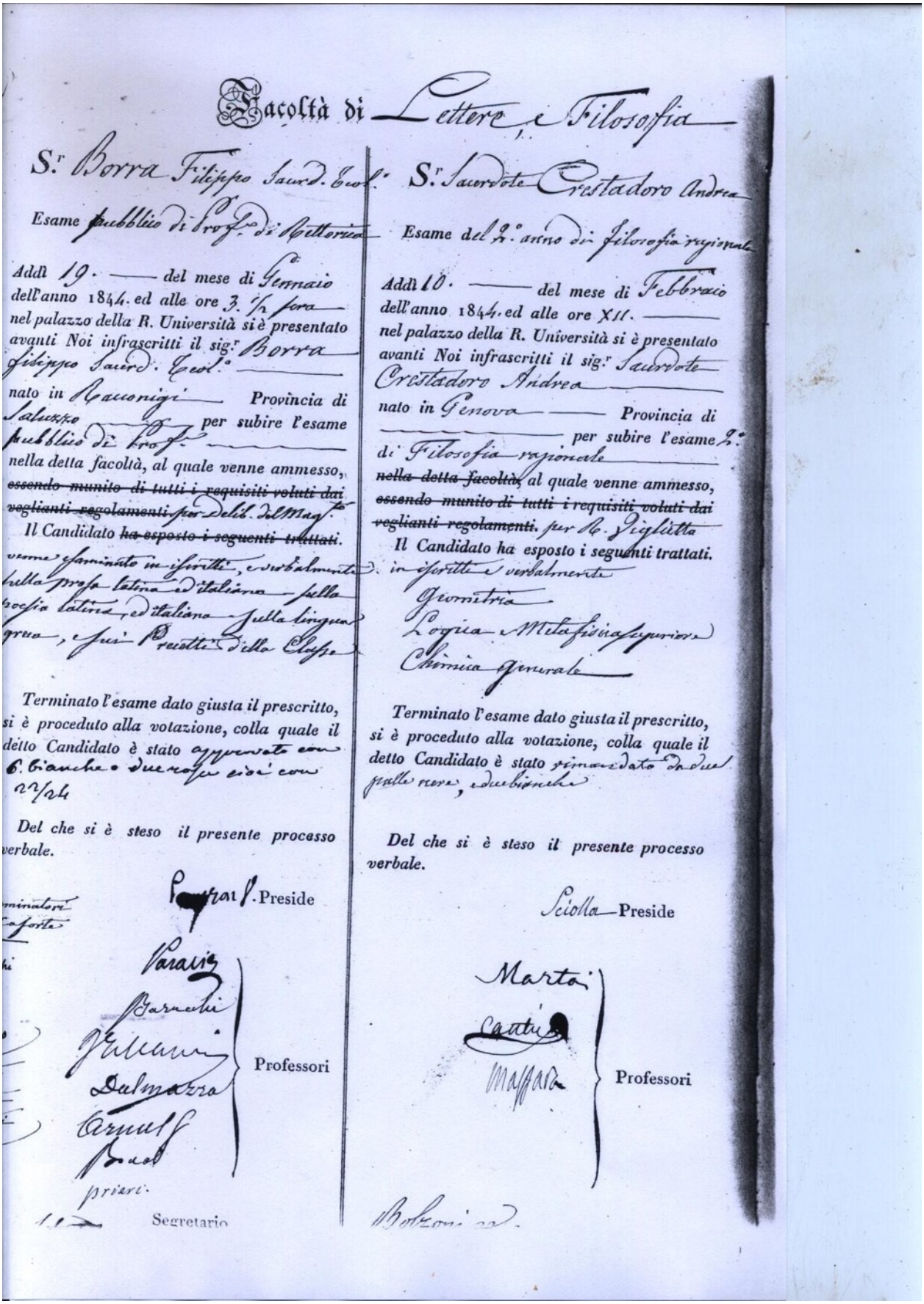
Terminato l'esame dato giusta il prescritto, si è proceduto alla votazione, colla quale il detto Candidato è stato approvato con tutti li punti, cioè con punti quaranta

Del che si è steso il presente processo verbale.

Sciolla Preside

Professori: Marta, Tardite, Tardite

Fig.5 Graduation Certificate (Science)



Facoltà di Lettere, e Filosofia

S.r Borra Filippo Sacerd. Ecol.o

Esame pubblico di Prof.e di Rettorica

Addì 19. ——— del mese di Gennaio dell'anno 1844. ed alle ore 3. P.m fora nel palazzo della R. Università si è presentato avanti Noi infrascritti il sig.r Borra Filippo Sacerd. Ecol.o ——— nato in Racconigi ——— Provincia di Saluzzo ——— per subire l'esame pubblico di Prof.e ——— nella detta facoltà, al quale venne ammesso, ~~essendo munito di tutti i requisiti voluti dai veglianti regolamenti per delib. del Mag.to~~

Il Candidato ~~ha esposto i seguenti trattati.~~ venne esaminato in iscritto, e verbalmente sulla prosa latina, ed italiana sulla poesia latina, ed italiana sulla lingua greca, sui Precetti della Classe

Terminato l'esame dato giusta il prescritto, si è proceduto alla votazione, colla quale il detto Candidato è stato approvato con 6. bianche, e due rosse cioè con 22/24

Del che si è steso il presente processo verbale.

Peyron P. Preside

Paravia
Barucchi
Gallenga
Dalmazzo
Arnulf
priori.

Professori

Segretario

S.r Sacerdote Cristadoro Andrea

Esame del 2.° anno di Filosofia razionale

Addì 10. ——— del mese di Febbraio dell'anno 1844. ed alle ore XII. ——— nel palazzo della R. Università si è presentato avanti Noi infrascritti il sig.r Sacerdote Cristadoro Andrea ——— nato in Genova ——— Provincia di ——— per subire l'esame 2.° di Filosofia razionale ——— ~~nella detta facoltà~~ al quale venne ammesso, ~~essendo munito di tutti i requisiti voluti dai veglianti regolamenti.~~ per 6. Pisellitta

Il Candidato ha esposto i seguenti trattati. in iscritto e verbalmente

Geometria
Logica Metafisica superiore
Chimica generale

Terminato l'esame dato giusta il prescritto, si è proceduto alla votazione, colla quale il detto Candidato è stato rimandato da due palle nere, e dubbiosche

Del che si è steso il presente processo verbale.

Sciolla Preside

Marta
Cantù
Massara

Professori

Bottoni

Fig.6 Graduation Certificate (Rational Philosophy)

## Crestadoro's nephew

At some stage around 1874 Crestadoro brought an orphaned nephew, the son of his deceased brother Carlo, to England. The *Momus* article and the obituaries record Crestadoro's generosity in rescuing his orphaned nephew from poverty but are imprecise as to date:

> The last visit he paid to Italy was about five years ago, for the purposes of seeing his surviving brother. He found him dead, and that his orphan boy was totally unprovided for. Mr. Crestadoro brought his nephew to England, placed him at a boarding school, where he now is, for as he intended to naturalise him as an Englishman, he knew his best means to such an end was a sound English education.

The *Manchester Guardian* obituary sets the date as 1874:

> As an illustration of his naturally benevolent disposition, we may mention that on his last visit to Italy, five years ago, he adopted the orphan son of his brother Carlo, and brought him to this country with the object of making him a good Englishman.

## Will

Crestadoro's will was witnessed on 2 January 1874 by two of his staff at Manchester Free Libraries, Charles William Sutton and Frank Albert Brindley. In the event of his wife's death, Crestadoro left money to his niece and nephew, children of his deceased brother Pietro, living at Spezzia. There is reference in the will to provision for possible, presumably as yet unborn, nephews and nieces under twenty-one. The will, with its early date in 1874, thus predated the visit to the brother Carlo he mistakenly thought still survived. Sadly, Crestadoro made no addendum to the will to make provision for Carlo's son, the nephew he brought back to England, and there can only be surmise as to what happened to him.

In a last curious link to the Italy of his childhood, Crestadoro left money in his will to support the education of women in Genoa. Women were the mainstay of industry in northern Italy. There were feminist movements and women active in the Risorgimento, often from an educated and privileged background, but generally the Risorgimento evolved in terms of men's freedom. Women did not gain the full vote in Italy until 1945 and education was not easily available to them. Christopher Duggan recounts the horrific story of the young teacher, Italia Donati, driven to suicide in 1884 by a malicious and evil campaign against her.[47]

It was therefore radical for Crestadoro to focus on education for women. He always supported suffrage and opportunities for women, regarding his female assistants in Manchester as highly intelligent and giving them responsibility. Perhaps this provision in his will denoted remembrance of a mother or sister whose abilities were not set free, as his were.

Incidentally, Crestadoro's good intentions were not realised. His will at probate was only £100 and Mrs Crestadoro inherited that sum.

[25] Alfredo Obertello, 'Genovesi nel mondo Andrea Crestadoro', *Giornale di Genova*, June 1932

[26] Mario Curreli, 'Dickensian onomastics in Conrad's Nostromo', in *Joseph Conrad Society's 2007 Annual International Conference, 33rd, held at The Polish Social and Cultural Association (POSK) in Hammersmith and at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich on 5-7 July.*

[27] Heather Ewing, *The Lost World of James Smithson* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007) p.311

[28] Emily Birchall, David Verey (ed.), *Wedding tour: January-June 1873 and visit to the Vienna Exhibition* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1985) pp. 31-34

[29] Charles Dickens, *Pictures from Italy,* (London: Bradbury, 1846) p.56

[30] www.netphobia.co.uk/archive/bu;hotel/aboutthebull.html

[31] G.I. Bruzzone 'Bernardino Crestadoro' in Tommaso
Nappo (ed.), *Archivo biografico Italia Nuoava Seroie* (Munchen: Saur, 2007), translated Denis Reidy

[32] 'Le epidemie di colera e l'Ospedale di S. Antonio', www.accademiaurbense.it

[33]' Le epidemie di colera e I'Ospedale di S. Antonio', www.accademiaurbense.it

[34] Paola Novaria, e-mail to author, 14 October 2005

[35] Vittorio Angiis, in Goffredo Casalis *Dizionario geografico, storico, statistico, commerciale degli stati di S.M, 1845* (Torino, 1833-56) p. 40

[36] *Bulletin des Lois de la République Française, Xe série, Premier Semestre de 1849 contenant les lois, déchets et arrêtés dintérêt public et général publis depuis le 1 janvier jusqu'au 30 juin 1849*. Tome Troisième. 112 a 174, (Paris: Impremerie Nationale, 1849)

[37] Cathy Caridi, 'Can a Priest *Ever* Return to the Lay State?' in *Catholic Exchange*, (12 November 2009) catholicexchange.com

[38] Christopher Duggan, *The Force of Destiny A History of Italy since 1796* (London, Allen Lane, 2007) p.128

[39] Duggan, *The Force of Destiny*, p. 87

[40] Obertello, 'Genovesi nel mondo Andrea Crestadoro'

[41] Valgimigli, *La Colonia Italiana di Manchester (1794-1932)*

[42] Obertello, 'Genovesi nel mondo Andrea Crestadoro'

[43] Duggan, *The Force of Destiny*, p. 147

[44] Cristina Della Coletta, *World Fair's Italian Style: The Great Exhibitions in Turin and their Narratives, 1860-1915* (Toronto: UTP, 2006) p. 20

[45] 'The City of Turin', *Saturday Magazine,* 693 (22 April 1843) pp.145-147

[46] Vittorio de Alfaro, 'A survey of Physics at the University Of Turin since 1720', www.ph.unito.it/fisicatouk.html

[47] Duggan, *The Force of Destiny*, pp.275-278

# Chapter Three: Italian Works

> As a tree requires its time and proper vegetation before it can bring its fruit to maturity, so the human understanding advances by degrees, collecting and grouping together extensive series of observations, till at last it is enabled to fix the data on which hinges the gates opening the way to the splendid mansion where Truth is dwelling. (Andrea Crestadoro)[48]

## Improve each shining hour[49]

Crestadoro's inventions, writings and actions all manifest his intent to bring beneficial knowledge to humanity, to adapt and improve on what has gone before.

He avoided personal references and it is only in his last work, a pamphlet on taxation reform published in 1876 that he gave his perspective on how ideas grow and his own role within the process. Crestadoro saw himself as trying to unify the disparate ideas found in his extensive reading:

> The writer, having frequently had occasion of gathering out in his readings, and making memoranda of a great number of valuable thoughts and excellent observations on the subject in question, has noted down as matter for after consideration and inquiry those that did not appear to him to strike a complete light. In course of time, following for himself that linked chain of conceptions which leads from principle to principle, his ideas and reasonings gradually ranged themselves and settled into a sort of harmonious order which gave them unity;[50]

He took an evolutionary view of progress, seeing a complex and staged growth to which many contributed. In this context it is understandable that the craft of indexing and librarianship became his vocation. It is largely through the efforts of librarians that information is made available to be turned, like nectar into honey, into knowledge. Crestadoro fully understood this: 'Nothing can more

effectively conduce to the rapid progress of knowledge, and the consequent well-being of mankind, than an efficient aid to the search of what has been previously written on any given subject.'[51]

The works Crestadoro produced in Italian and French, though a mixed assortment, all shared a common link of enabling progress and social reform in Italy. They were the products of scholarship, thought and a humane spirit.

## Crestadoro's Grammar: *Saggio di Instituzioni sulla Facoltá della Parola*

Turin is renowned as a centre for publishing, printing, literature and art. In the nineteenth century, publishers in Turin catered for the growing aspirations of the middle classes. Bernardino Crestadoro's sermon *Della Dignita de'Sacri Ministri* was published in 1841 by the prestigious Giuseppe Pomba (1795-1876). Pomba symbolizes the new spirit of Turin: he travelled to England to investigate presses, installed the first mechanical press in Turin, was imprisoned for challenging Royal Printing privileges, published the radical *Popular Readings* and as councillor campaigned for the City Public Library.

Andrea Crestadoro followed Bernardino into print with two works published in 1843 in Turin by Enrico Mussano.

I cannot trace a history for this publisher but judging by the works produced, serious studies on medicine, law, reform and regional history, Mussano flourished between 1843 and 1849. In 1843, Mussano published Crestadoro's grammar and, in 1844, a work by D. Michele Ponza, a Professor of Italian and Latin. This was a book of translation exercises from the Piedmont dialect to Italian, *Antologia piemontese per esercizio di traduzione dal piemontese nell'italiano parlare*. Both Crestadoro's grammar and Ponza's book of exercises reflect the new interest in a national language - an issue for the Risorgimento.

According to the reviews, *Saggio di Instituzioni sulla Facoltá della Parola*, is the first of Crestadoro's two works to be published in 1843. The copy in the University of Turin corroborates this, as there is an advertisement for Crestadoro's second publication on the final page. He is simply cited as A Crestadoro on the title pages, so perhaps he was already underplaying the role of priest.

Paola Novaria judged Crestadoro's work be a school level textbook:

> Some days ago I could see one of the two books I told you about, that is Saggio d'Instituzioni sulla facoltá della parola, Torino, Tipografia Mussano, 1843 (two volumes). The book is about grammar and surely it's not for University students. In the introduction the author says he was a teacher for many years ('Versato molto tempo nel pubblico insegnamento della Gioventù'). I think he wasn't a professor at University but in elementary or high school.[52]

It is not surprising that Crestadoro, as a Piarist teacher, produced a textbook grammar for the Italian language. There was a demand for vernacular textbooks in the nineteenth century. The world was opening up, travel abroad becoming popular after Napoleon's defeat, business interests needed commercial language skills and there were floods of exiles competing to teach languages: and to produce grammars.

However, Crestadoro went beyond a simple remit into a controversial area, for the very validity of the Italian language was a burning political issue. Did the range of dialects indicate that Italy was a geographical clutter of entirely separate territories with nothing in common? Or was there a unifying Italian language behind all these variations? The debate was fierce for if the idea of a

national language was flawed, then what value was there in a dream of Italian unity? In *Saggio di Instituzioni* Crestadoro probed into philology and the origin of Italian, but in an obscure way. The work met with an immediate irritated review:

> It seems that Signor Crestadoro has aimed to produce a purely didactic book, which was customary to the founders of grammatical study, and this is so much more manifest in that the first volume contains fleetingly presented lessons of dialogue between master and scholar in which the first rules of syntax are discussed. If this is right, we don't know, because the author is pleased to use a terminology which is strange and unintelligible to novice minds and because starting from the most obvious grammatical precepts all at once he raises the most arduous philological speculations.[53]

It is often difficult to penetrate Crestadoro's prose but in his grammar, he does seem to have explored wider themes of linguistics as a discipline, the origins of language and the structure of Italian. It is interesting that in this early book, even writing in his native language, Crestadoro still stumbled to express the complexity of his ideas and did himself disservice. Another clue to the wider intention of the work is the fulsome dedication to 'Conte Cav. Antonio Piola', listing him as an advisor on the text and a secretary of a council. These exuberant expressions of gratitude and good wishes with the use of the familiar form of address (tu) suggest a level of close friendship. Antonio Piola was the Prefect of Genoa from 1849 to1853, and a man associated with progress.

Crestadoro was moving in prominent circles, and *Saggio di Instituzioni* had a significance beyond a simple grammar. He describes himself in the book as having been a teacher in a state school for a long time: 'Versato molto tempo nel pubblico insegnamento della Gioventu.' The use of 'Versato', poured, shed, spilt, suggests a sense of drudgery.

Andrea Crestadoro started at some point reaching out beyond the struggles of the classroom.

He sent a copy of *Saggio di Instituzioni* to The Royal Society of London. It was recorded as a donation from the author in 1846.[54] Throughout his life Crestadoro followed the donation strategy to make his name known. He was assiduous in sending his publications across the world, selecting as recipients the prestigious personages and organisations that he admired.

The Royal Society gracefully accepted and preserved *Saggio di Instituzioni.* Given there are very few copies surviving and those mainly are in Italy, it was exciting to discover one in the UK.

## Crestadoro on Savings Banks

Crestadoro's second book, published by Mussano in 1843, is illustrative of his sympathetic and liberal views. This is his monumental work (256 pages) on savings banks, *Della organizzazione delle Casse di Risparmio dei Monti di Pietà e delle Banche Generali; nuovo mezzo facile di stabilimento applicable a tutte le località degli stati di Sua Maesta, foralto di una nuova semplificazione dei relativi metodi di contabilita e scritturazione, con una racclota delle regole fondamentali di economia finanziari.*

This translates as *Of the organization of Savings banks, Pawnbrokers and Banks in general; new easy means of establishment applicable to all places in the states of His Majesty, provided with a new simplification of the relative methods of accounting and bookkeeping, with a collection of the fundamental rules of financial economics*.

*Della Organizzazione* is seldom referred to in lists of Crestadoro's works, yet copies are held in several Italian libraries as well as the Bibliotheque Nationale. It sounds a dry subject but in fact

savings banks were a radical development, and Crestadoro's interest suggests he was definitely on the side of the poor, as a contemporary review by Goffredo Casalis made clear:

> The distinguished priest A. Crestadoro, in his valuable book on savings banks, pawnshops and general banks, says that all the inhabitants of this province without distinction of age, social status or sex, and charitable institutions, workers' and seamen's associations agreeing with the articles were allowed to make deposits in the savings bank.[55]

As well as proposing new approaches, the work is extensive, detailed and factual with studies of the different banks and shareholders. Yet economic historians have not picked up Crestadoro's contribution to this thread of Italian history.

Crestadoro's book was driven both by interest in finance and by his view of finance in relationship to the poor and their opportunities. It may seem strange that a priest would be so concerned with savings banks, but in fact it made perfect sense. In Italy the Jesuits were the pioneers of the Monti de Pieta, pawnshops, a system of saving that enabled the poor to acquire loans from their own resources.

Crestadoro always admitted that he drew on the ideas of others. I discovered an article published in 1842 that may have inspired him. This is entitled *On the Monts de Piete of Rome, Genoa, Turin, and Paris, and Other Pawnbroking Establishments on the Continent* and the author is Henry John Porter. Porter read the paper to the Statistical Section of the British Association on 3 August 1841, and it was published in the January issue of the prestigious *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*[56]. Crestadoro would have had access to this in the learned societies of Turin.

Porter gave a detailed history of the pious institutions established first by Emperor Augustus and then by the Catholic Church. His article drew on his visits to Monte di Pieta in Italy, including Genoa and Turin. Did he meet with Crestadoro? Porter claimed to have established several equivalent institutions in Ireland and his article is packed with knowledgeable comment on the statistical tables, facts and figures he compiled. Like Crestadoro he was on a mission of improvement: 'In conclusion, I beg to state, that the more I see of these benevolent institutions the more I am convinced of their being applicable to Great Britain; and that should they be generally introduced into this country, the evils of pawnbroking will be greatly diminished, and the poor materially benefited.'

The whole savings bank movement originated in 1810 in the tiny hamlet of Ruthwell in Scotland, set up by the minister, Dr Henry Duncan, a wise and noble man, to alleviate the appalling conditions of his poor parishioners. The savings banks Crestadoro describes follow a similar model. Henry Duncan's rule for a minimum deposit was sixpence (compared to the £10 of commercial banks) and Crestadoro mentions a similarly low figure of fifty cents.

In his second book, Crestadoro again tangled the threads of his ideas, losing the theory in complexities of detail. At least he received the compliment of a major review; over three pages in *Annali universali di statistica, economia pubblia, storia, viaggi e commercio* by Giuseppe Sacchi.[57] This reviewer also referred to Crestadoro's grammar being more in the nature of linguistic theory rather than textbook:

> Mr. Crestadoro wrote a 'Study of the foundations of the authority of the word' to propose various philological reforms. Now he has published a book 'On savings banks and pawnshops' to introduce various economic reforms in these too. We will offer a summary of this work and will make known our way of thinking on the principal ideas presented in it.
>
> The author dislikes the fact that the administrators of the savings banks set up a capital

> provident fund against unforeseen needs, and collect on the fruits of the capital given on loan at a greater rate of interest than those allowed to depositors. The theory of making savings on the savings of the poor seems to the author to be such as to destroy the wholly beneficial purpose that Savings Banks ought to have. To remove radically this diminution of benefit, he proposes a project of radical reform …

Giuseppe Sacchi seriously explored but did not accept Crestadoro's proposed reforms to save costs, to simplify the systems, and to create a better deal for the poor. Crestadoro suggested fixing interest rates for each individual and privatising the processing of the pawns. Overall Sacchi was impressed by the depth of the study and the radical nature of the proposals: 'While we therefore declare open our dissent from the ideas professed by the author, we have to praise him for his good intentions and for a valuable report which he has given.'

There is a curious reference to the work in *Genova e le duc Riviere,*[58] a suggestion that the work influenced Government, as would be said of Crestadoro's later work *Du Pouvoir Temporel:*

> Extract from speech read to the Society of Children's Nursery of Piacenza generally held the day May 27, 1843 Piacenza, tipgrafia of A. Del Majno, Par IV 5. On the organization of savings banks – a book whose author is Mr Crestadoro of Turin casts light on this. The author of the work was inspired by the Higher Authority and as he confesses his book proved of such interest to the Government that it does not need a promoter.

When Crestadoro died he was writing a work on joint stock companies: the manuscript has vanished. Again he was investigating a seemingly dry financial subject that had an important social dimension and so linked back to this work of his youth. As Henry W. Wolff commented some considered Joint Stock Companies as a way of escaping restrictions for Friendly Societies:

> The present regulations cramp them and threaten finally to strangle them. Mr Bartley has suggested that they should escape from the peril by reconstituting themselves as Joint Stock Companies. Joint Stock Companies unfortunately suggest profit, dividend, and moreover, make control and inquiry difficult, if not illusory, whereas all savings bank managers are agreed that inquiry and control cannot be too severe and too searching.[59]

## Translation of Bancroft's History of America

By his own account Crestadoro translated into Italian part of one of the most influential bestsellers of the age. Axon, *Momus* and several other sources refer to his translation of George Bancroft's *History of America*. This translation is a further indication of where Crestadoro's sympathies lay and of his political interest in constitutional liberty. The independence, progress and democracy of the United States helped spark revolution in Europe, showing what determined patriots could achieve. George Bancroft, a fervent Democrat and a passionate patriot, made it his task to record the founders and history of his country's independence for the world to admire.

A scholar, European traveller, and democratic politician, Bancroft devoted much of his life to the creation of his *History of the United States*. A person of great charm, he received more than the usual polite attentions from the eminent figures he met in Europe as a young man. Byron invited him to make further visits, he met Goethe at Jena and Weimar, Alessandro Manzoni in Milan, Alexander von Humboldt and Lafayette in Paris. As minister plenipotentiary in London from 1846 to 1849 he conversed at length with the Royal family, and mixed with the best of society. He ruthlessly exploited his connections for his research. Priceless family archives were opened up to him and he left England with crates of original source material. His wife joked that: 'His heart is

full of manuscripts' and that he made up to ladies: 'to see what papers her family has in the garret, and if they have none, moving on to the next.'[60]

He was equally honoured and given access to state papers, archives and private collections in Paris, Prussia and then the German Empire. He was appointed as the American minister in all these countries. Bismarck was an intimate, as were the emperors Wilhelm I and Friedrich.

Bancroft started the great history as a young man in 1823 and produced his final revision in 1885. There are ten volumes covering a period of thirty-nine years: the first was published in 1834 and the last in 1873. (He also wrote an additional two volume work on the constitution as late as 1882.) Bancroft's *History of the United States* was popular throughout the world and translated into several languages.

R. Wickcliffe, at the United States Embassy in Turin, urged the translation of Bancroft's *History of the United States* into Italian but 'was blocked by Piedmonteste officials'[61]. This was a dangerous work.

Yonatan Eval in *The Young America Movement and the Transformation of the Democratic Party, 1828-1861*, describes how R. Wickliffe and Charles Carenzi-Gallesio contacted George Bancroft to suggest a translation: 'George Bancroft, for example, achieved a respectable European profile due to widespread positive reception of his History of the United States. In 1844 he received an offer to translate the work from an admirer in Turin.' The information is cited from the correspondence of Charles Carenzi-Gallesio and R. Wickliffe with George Bancroft.[62]

R. Wickliffe, Charles Carenzi and Crestadoro were all fellow members of Masserano's Impulsoria syndicate, the invention that brought Crestadoro to England. The Impulsoria syndicate was active by 1849, so clearly there was already a relationship between the three men. Crestadoro was keeping good company: his personality, intellect and learning won him influential friends.

Carlo Carenzi produced an Italian translation of the first three volumes of Bancroft's *History of the United States.* These were published between 1834 and 1840 and covered the prehistory and colonisation period. Carenzi's translation was published in two volumes in 1847 as *Storia degli Uniti dalla scoperta del continente americana ... Volgarizzamento sulla decima edizione americana ... con note ed altri scritti originali di Carlo Carenzi.*[63]

Crestadoro gave his English friends the impression he was wholly responsible for the translation, which is an exaggeration to say the least. Carenzi gave no mention of Crestadoro in his translator's note, but this may have been to hide his involvement from the Church authorities. Crestadoro only referred to his part in the translation of Bancroft when he was living safely in England. It is likely that the authorities kept an eye on Crestadoro, for all three of his Italian works were potentially subversive.

Bancroft's views encouraged the Italian patriots in their struggle against tyranny, oppression, both state and temporal, and against foreign rulers. Although urged by advisors to be objective, Bancroft's politics and his sympathy for freedom, self-government and democracy inspire his overall theme and colour his words. In controversial times he was clear on the evil of slavery, devoting a chapter to it in the *History of the United States*.

It is unlikely anyone reads Bancroft now, but he is remembered for shaping the profession of historian, and for his *History of the United States* reaching universal readership and interest.

In September 1877, Andrea Crestadoro, as Chief Librarian, welcomed Samuel Swett Green and other American librarians on their visit to Manchester Free Libraries. Green recorded this historic

tour.[64] It is an odd quirk that long after Crestadoro's death Samuel Swett Green wrote a memoir of George Bancroft[65] whose life almost covered the century. Bancroft was born in 1800 and died in 1891; he was reputed at the time of his death to be the oldest living graduate of Harvard College. If Green knew of the odd connection between the Crestadoro translation and Bancroft, he does not mention it.

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[48] Andrea Crestadoro, *On the Best and Fairest Mode of Raising the Public Revenue* (London: Longmans, 1876) p. 6

[49] Isaac Watts, 'Against Idleness and Mischief' in *Divine Songs for Children (1715)*

[50] Crestadoro, *On the Best and Fairest Mode of Raising the Public Revenue, Preface*

[51] Andrea Crestadoro, 'The Compiler to the Reader' in *Catalogue of the Books in the Manchester Free Library Reference Department*, (London: Sampson Low, 1864)

[52] Paola Novaria, e-mail to author, 13 September 2004

[53] Revista Europea Giornale di Scienze Morali, Letteratura Arti e Varietà, Nuova serie l:I (1843) p.393, translated P.Oddy

[54] Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, 136 (1846)

[55] Vittorio Angious, translated P.Oddy

[56] Henry John Porter, 'On the Monts de Piete of Rome, Genoa, Turin, and Paris, and Other Pawnbroking Establishments on the Continent' in *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, 4:4 (January, 1842), pp. 348-357

[57] G. Sacchi, 'Della organizzazione delle casse di risparmio, dei monti di futa' e delle banche generali, etc.' in *Annali Universali Statistica Economia Pubblica, Storia, Viaggi e Commercio*. LXXIX: 235 (1844) pp.58-61

[58] Giuseppe Banchero, Genova e le due Riviere. pt. 1. Monumenti pubblici. (Genova, 1846) p.361

[59] Savings Banks at Home and Abroad Henry W, Wolff Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Vol 60 No 2 (June 1897) pp 278-359.

[60] Russel B. Nye, *George Bancroft Brahmin Rebel*, (New York, Octagon Books, 1972 [c1944]) p.168

[61] Alexander deConde, *Half bitter, Half sweet: an excursion into Italian-American history* (New York: Scribner, 1971) p.40

[62] Yonatan Eyal, *The Young America Movement and the Transformation of the Democratic Party, 1828-1861* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007) p.143

[63] George Bancroft, Russell N. Carlo Carenzi (translator), *Storia degli Uniti dalla scoperta del continente americano ... Volgarizzamento sulla decima edizione americana ... con note ed altri scritti originali di Carlo Carenzi*. (Losanna; Torino,1847)

[64] Samuel Swett Green, *The Public Library movement in the United States 1853-189*3, (Boston: Boston Book Co, 1913) p.63

[65] Samuel Swett Green, *George Bancroft from the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, at the Semi-Annual meeting, April 29, 1891* (Worcester, Mass.: Hamilton, 1891)

# Chapter Four: Propaganda in French

> Andrea Crestadoro… a Genoese who had a good name in England where he established himself in the first half of the last century and was the author of important publications also of political interest for our Risorgimento.[66]

## Risorgimento

Crestadoro's works in Italian associate him with revolutionary subjects, as the above entry from an Italian bibliography indicates. However, his main work directly linked with the Risorgimento was published in French.

### *Du Pouvoir Temporel*

Crestadoro was the author of *Du Pouvoir Temporel de la Souveraineté Pontificale ou de l'Organisation Civile et Religieuse de l'Italie Une et Libre Applicable à l'Organisation Civile et Religieuse de Tous les Peuples*. This translates as *The Temporal Power of Papal Sovereignty or Civil and Religious Organization of a Unified and Applicable to the Civil and Religious Organization of All Peoples*. Auguste Poulet-Malassis with Lucien de Rosny-Foucqueville as editor published the book in Paris in 1861. It is in two parts, runs to 161 pages, and the theme is the burning issue of papal sacred and temporal power. The price was four francs, roughly equating to ten pounds. Crestadoro is described on the title page as a professor from Genoa.

As mentioned in Chapter One, Crestadoro disappears from view in England from January 1860 to September 1861. Where was he in this period of producing *Du Pouvoir Temporel*, Italy, Paris or London? In his application for naturalisation[67] he claimed he was an editor for Sampson Low until the end of 1861, and was then engaged on the Manchester Free Library catalogue. There is no

evidence of the exact dates of his employment with Sampson Low, but his appointment with Manchester did not start until September 1862.

## Alfred Owen Legge

Crestadoro always claimed that his book influenced the policies of both Cavour and Menabrea, first and third Prime Ministers respectively of the newly unified Italy.

Yet beyond this, Crestadoro seems to have been strangely reticent. A reader at Manchester Free Libraries, Alfred Owen Legge, writing on the same subject, was surprised to find the Chief Librarian had produced a key work some years before. He wrote to Crestadoro on 19 May 1870:

> I had the pleasure of sending you a few days since, the announcement of my forthcoming book on the Temporal Power of the Papacy. I was not then aware that you had yourself written upon the same subject, much less that I was indebted to you for an idea that finds expression upon my first page… In my note book I find some remarks (in French) upon the dual nature of government – political & religious – copied there certainly many years since, but when or whence obtained I have forgotten. It was only this afternoon that speaking with a gentleman upon the subject he informed me that without a doubt they were extracted from your book – I regret that I do not possess the means of verifying this statement which after all may be incorrect, but am unwilling in even so small a matter to poach upon another man's work.[68]

Alfred Owen Legge was a star of the Manchester Literary Club – an author mainly known for his attempts to rehabilitate the reputation of Richard III. His study of temporal power was entitled: *The Growth of the Temporal Power of the Papacy: a historical review with observations upon the Council of the Vatican*.[69] His approach very much echoes Crestadoro's examination in *Du Pouvoir Temporel* of the dual nature of individual and society and the corruption of the Catholic Church through clinging onto secular power.

## Cavour

Did Crestadoro really influence Cavour in the early days of establishing the first government of unified Italy? It is quite a stupendous claim.

Cavour died on 6 June 1861 and the book was published sometime in the same year. Even if it was published early in 1861 there was little time for influence. If Crestadoro's claim is true, there must have been some previous collaboration with Cavour.

This is a possible scenario.

Crestadoro may well have encountered Cavour in the progressive circles in Genoa and Turin. He may have supplied Cavour with information from England on developments in industry, invention and the state of research. Cavour had visited England and used agents to keep him informed. Perhaps at the critical period of unification with Pius IX still holding out against the Italian Government, Crestadoro suggested the work to Cavour and was supported financially whilst he produced it. Crestadoro may have written the text in Italian and Lucien de Rosny translated it into French. Drafts of the text may have been supplied to Cavour as Crestadoro wrote it. (Cavour was equally at home in Italian or French, which was actually his first language as a Savoy aristocrat.) A radical publisher in Paris agreed to bring the book out.

Certainly in the first three months of 1861, Cavour was preoccupied with papal power. He tried to persuade the Pope to withdraw the French garrison that protected him, and so enable Rome to

become the capital of a fully unified Italy. The French Emperor was tiring of propping up 'the ungrateful and incompetent Papal regime'[70] and Cavour tried to persuade France to withdraw their troops protecting the Pope. The fact that Crestadoro's book was published in French suggests it was designed as propaganda for France.

The opening negotiations for the Pope to relinquish temporal power started favourably. The proposals were very much on the lines of Crestadoro's detailed financial and administrative plan. Cavour, recognising that the Italian nation was profoundly Catholic, urged the Papalists to see the value of a new spiritual church and the healing of the schism. He outlined the practical benefits for the clergy, again echoing details of Crestadoro's plan.

Then disaster struck: Cavour's agent, Pantaleoni, was commanded to leave Rome in twenty-four hours. He fled on 21 March, followed quickly by his supporter Father Passaglia. Pius wished to drive the whole Pantaleoni family from Rome but learning his wife was English drew back in fear of 'that cursed Lord Palmerston.'[71] There is much conjecture on what caused the debacle. The arrival of the Bourbon King and Queen in Rome after the fall of Gaeta was a significant factor, for in collusion with the Pope they were organizing the holy war of brigandage in the south that sowed dragon teeth for Italy.

Some thought that even the astute Cavour had failed to outwit the malign power of the Curia. But Cavour assessed that papal temporal power was ultimately doomed and, as ever, he could take the long view without despairing: 'He knew that an institution which secures conformity by silencing, and if it cannot silence, by outlawing its members who are most sensitive to conscience and most accessible to ideas, is far on its way towards petrification.'[72]

## Cavour's Speeches

The themes of Crestadoro's book are echoed in the position Cavour took up as Prime Minister in the new Italian Parliament after his secret negotiations had failed.

In three great speeches, Cavour went public on the necessity for the Pope to abandon temporal power, for Rome to become the capital of a united Italy and, as a free church in a free state, for the Church to regain its spiritual purpose. Dealing with historical instances and facts, separating the secular and religious natures of the Pope, avoiding criticism of the Curia or doctrine, he offered a clear remedy for the ill of the Roman Question. The speeches were reported, usually in full, in newspapers across Britain.

Cavour concluded the third speech (together they make one oration) with an emotional appeal that electrified the hearers:

> Holy Father, accept the terms which emancipated Italy offers you! Accept the terms which must assure the liberty of the Church, enhance the lustre of the see where Providence has placed you, augment the influence of the Church and at the same time carry to completion the great edifice of the regeneration of Italy, assure the peace of that nation which after all, in the midst of so many misfortunes, of so many vicissitudes, has remained most faithful and most attached to the true spirit of Catholicism.[73]

Crestadoro's claim to have influenced Cavour, far from being exaggerated, looks credible. There are striking parallels between these speeches and *Du Pouvoir Temporel,* a similar mixture of emotion and strategy. His prepublication text, whether in Italian or French, may well have provided ideas, phrases and content for this famous oration, Cavour's last masterpiece.

On his death bed Cavour worried endlessly about all he was leaving undone, and when given the last rites whispered, 'Friar, friar, a Free Church in a Free State!' His final words were peaceful, 'Italy is made – all is safe.'[74] In fact it would take another ten years before Pius IX lost his temporal power.

## General Menabrea

It is certainly possible that *Du Pouvoir Temporel* influenced Luigi Menabrea, as Crestadoro claimed. Crestadoro would have known him at least by reputation at the University of Turin. Menabrea was active as a military engineer, a scientist and in the Piedmontese parliament. In 1867, Menabrea became Prime Minister, resigning in 1869. It was Menabrea who had to deal with the crisis of Garibaldi's invasion of the Papal States in 1867. Whilst having no sympathy for Garibaldi, Menabrea changed from his early views that there could be compromise with the Vatican, to rejection of any papal retention of temporal powers. He was a key person in the negotiations between Victor Emmanuel and Napoleon III over Italy's right to occupy the Papal States.

Crestadoro in the *Momus* interview, referred to a private letter he sent to Menabrea giving further explanation of his ideas. Menabrea, a conservative politician, tried to stabilise the new nation's public finances with taxation and austerity measures, prudently avoided war with France over Rome and kept up his experiments with elasticity for which he is now remembered. However, whether Crestadoro helped him or not, he failed to deal with the Papal States.

George Perkins Marsh, the first United States Minister to Italy, was a keen observer of the problems faced by the new Government and his correspondence reveals much of the complexities of attitudes and events. Marsh sent a private letter to the Department of State in which he expressed his disappointment in Menabrea as head of government, as he seemed incapable of finding a definitive solution to the Roman Question.[75]

## Garibaldi

Crestadoro claimed connections with Cavour and Menabrea. There is also evidence that Mazzini tried to use him: Victor Emmanuel's son, Umberto I, regarded him as worthy of the Corona d'Italia. It now transpires that Garibaldi knew of Crestadoro's book. Albeit faintly, Crestadoro was linked to the key players of Italian unification.

Garibaldi was passionately driven to seize the Papal States and Rome and to overthrow the Pope's temporal power. Indeed, he proposed at the 1867 Congress in Geneva that: 'The papacy, being the most harmful of all secret societies, ought to be abolished.'[76]

Anti-Catholic forces gathered around Garibaldi. Volunteers from different nations rushed to join him or to defend Pius IX. Riots broke out in England as Irish Catholics defended their church. Twice, in 1862 and in 1867, Garibaldi emerged from his home on the rocky island of Caprera to launch expeditions against the Papal States and Rome. Twice he ended up wounded, and briefly imprisoned by the very Italian Government he had empowered by his military victories.

Rome eventually fell without Garibaldi's help and Pius IX became the 'Prisoner of the Vatican'. Garibaldi, as a member of the Italian Parliament, became obsessed with a different fight; to overcome the flooding of the Tiber and so rid Rome of malaria.

It now appears that Garibaldi, the most legendary and heroic figure of the Risorgimento, had a copy of *Du Pouvoir Temporel*. A recent survey of the books in Garibaldi's library at Caprera lists Crestadoro's *Du Pouvoir Temporel* amongst the collection.[77] Apparently the pages are uncut,[78] but

even so this is evidence of its being known to the leaders of the Risorgimento.

## Auguste Poulet-Malassis

*Du Pouvoir Temporel* was published by Poulet-Malassis at '97 Rue Richelieu et Passage Mires 36' (now Passage de Princes). I visited the address in 2006: the premises had evolved into a Legoland shop, but the former glories were apparent.

The association with Auguste Poulet-Malassis underlines the significance of *Du Pouvoir Temporel*. Poulet-Malassis was a socialist, revolutionary, printer and publisher of dangerous journals, and a man at the centre of Parisian culture and learning. Passage Mires became very much a literary club, a meeting place for his friends, full of young artists and writers. All this contributed to Poulet-Malassis' financial and political downfall. He was forced into exile and set up in Brussels. After the amnesty in August 1869, Poulet-Malassis returned to Paris and died there in 1878. In August 1869 Crestadoro made a trip to Brussels but there is no information as to why. Did he visit his old publisher?

In *Auguste Poulet-Malassis, L'editeur de Baudelaire*,[79] Claude Pichois writes specifically of the works Poulet-Malassis published on the Italian question in the critical period of 1859-1862. As might be expected, these works were supportive of liberty, Italian unification and were anti-clerical. The most notorious contained the inflammatory sermons of Garibaldi's army chaplain, Alessandro Gavacci. Published in 1861 in a translation by Felix Mornand[80], this brought Poulet-Malassis to the attention of the police.

Pichois includes *Du Pouvoir Temporel* in his review of these Risorgimento publications: 'Andrea Crestadoro in Du Pouvoir temporel, with the French edited [perhaps translated] by Lucien de Rosny-Foucqueville, respects the pope, but opposes his secular power.'[81]

## Victor Hugo's copy

There is nothing in *Du Pouvoir Temporel* to indicate exactly when it was published in 1861. Fortunately, two letters have been preserved in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. These show that the work was definitely published by 13 September 1861.

On that date, Crestadoro sent a copy to Victor Hugo from 19 Great Ormond Street, Queen Square, London, together with his letter in French. Intriguingly he used false BM notepaper, stamped with a heading that never existed: 'British Museum Library, Search, Extract & Translation Office'. This was not the first time Crestadoro had set up a fake front.

Crestadoro's decision to send *Du Pouvoir Temporel* to Victor Hugo suggests that he held fairly revolutionary sympathies. Victor Hugo admired Garibaldi whole-heartedly, and his speech from Jersey in June 1860 was published in newspapers across Europe. He incited the Catholic Church with his virulent 'priest-bashing', condemning the bigoted education, the doctrine of original sin and: 'described his ideal paradise as a 'wide-gated garden' with 'a sweet, mysterious WC' for the edicts of the Catholic Church.'[82]

The envelope was simply addressed to 'Monsieur Victor Hugo, Island of Guernesay'[83] and translates as:

> Sir
>
> I owe to Mr De La Barthe the honour of offering you a copy of a little work on liberty, politics and religion of people that I have published and that I send you with this letter.

> Wishing, Sir, that you will accept this as an expression of tribute for you from one who has been for a long time one of your admirers,
>
> A Crestadoro

Victor Hugo wrote back promptly on 20 September, addressing his letter from Hauteville House. The letter appears to be drafted in French and then sent as a translation:

> Your book, Sir, is the result of an excellent idea, though differing from you on some points, I applaud the noble and eloquent pages I have just read. Pray, accept my congratulations and thanks,
>
> Victor Hugo
>
> Be so good as to remember me to M. de la Barthe.

## M. de la Barthe

The only M. de la Barthe I can identify as a possible mutual acquaintance of Andrea Crestadoro and Victor Hugo is a royalist agent whose long life, from 1773 to 1869, was packed with conspiracy and action. He is remembered for offering to undertake a mission to Wellington in 1813: 'Wellington gave him a dinner, but obviously did not wish to be encumbered by a royalist faction.[84]

But is it likely that Victor Hugo would know a royalist agent?

Renowned as a republican, it is a surprise to realise Victor Hugo was a committed royalist as a young man; his mother, after all was a fervent Catholic royalist. M. de la Barthe is such a charismatic figure that it is possible he was Victor Hugo's friend, even after Hugo changed political allegiance. There is a pamphlet on *Un Agent Royaliste en 1814 Le Baron de la Barthe*[85] that vividly portrays him, flamboyant even in old age:

> Some still remember that old man of very high stature, who carefully guard until the end impeccable black hair, and whose features, strongly marked, were somehow were mummified with the impact of the years. They remember him as a witness of a distant past who, born in the reign of Louis XV, possessed a right to keep the ways of the ancient regime.

The connection with Crestadoro remains unsolved but presumably he knew M. de la Barthe from Paris.

## M. Lucien de Rosny-Foucqueville

The story of *Du Pouvoir Temporel* is shadowed with picaresque figures. M. Lucien de Rosny-Foucqueville is listed on the title page as the editor and 'Membre de plusieurs societies savants' but according to *Bibliographie italico-française universelle* he was the translator: 'Crestadoro (A.) Du Pouvoir temporel et de la Souveraineté pontificale, ou De l'organisation civile et religieuse de l'Italie une et libre, applicable à l'organisation civile et religieuse de tous les peuples, **traduit par L. de Rosny-Foucqueville**. Paris, Poulet-Malassis, in-8, 1861.'[86]

This is the only information I have found that indicates *Du Pouvoir Temporel* was written, presumably in Italian, before it was translated by de Rosny and published in French.

The Rosny clan was 'une famille de gens de lettres' in Valenciennes: Lucien de Rosny's father had a rich library with rare oriental works.[87] He continued the scholarly and book-loving family traditions, being variously described as an archaeologist, historian, man of letters and author.

I came across an anecdote that casts him in a rather suspicious light. A mystery is not unexpected in this nineteenth century labyrinthine world of societies, archives, manuscripts and secrets, and Crestadoro's editor was apparently involved in some shadowy business at the BM.

A Finnish historian, Pekka Masonen, in his work *The Negroland revisited: Discovery and Invention in the Sudanese Middle Ages,*[88] relates a curious tale of Lucien de Rosny and a manuscript of dubious existence. If the manuscript were authentic, it would have supported French claims for reaching Africa in the fourteenth century.

> While visiting the British Museum in 1852, the French philologist Lucien de Rosny came across a fourteenth century manuscript describing the voyage of a French merchant called Jehan Prunaut from Rouen to West Africa. This document appeared authentic and it seemed to prove that Villaut's saga was, after all, true. Rosny himself did not at first understand the importance of this document, and it was some time until he passed his notes to the French historian Pierre Margry (1818-94) who in 1867 published a book in which he tried to defend the historical truth of the Norman sources. Such an effort complied with the spirit of the Second Empire.

On investigation by Richard Henry Major of the Royal Geographical Society and the Hakluyt Society, it appeared that de Rosny had not consulted the document inside the BM but that another reader, William Carter, gave it to him at the main entrance. Major found no trace of this manuscript or record of William Carter as a reader. De Rosny's visit to the BM was recorded but Major did not believe a word of his tale of Carter and a manuscript that had 'vanished like ashes before the wind'.

Crestadoro was a reader at the BM in 1852 and perhaps he encountered de Rosny there. Despite the tale of the dubious manuscript Lucien de Rosny was well known as a scholar and his involvement in *Du Pouvoir Temporel*, either as editor, reviser of the text, or translator, could only have helped to market it in France.

## *Du Pouvoir Temporel* – First Part

*Du Pouvoir Temporel* is a curious book and I have not traced any reviews of it apart from the brief mention by Pichois. Victor Hugo's response is interesting as he picks up on Crestadoro's eloquence and passion, despite the acres of administrative details.

In the first part, *L'Organisation Civile*, Crestadoro deals very much with the problems of absolute monarchy, the need to ensure that any government will respect the rights of the people. The ideas seem quite radical: universal suffrage, the basic rights of all people to have political choice and equal opportunity. Revolution is seen as the outcome of abuses. Crestadoro gives a rousing start to his work, comparing absolute and constitutional government, the weaknesses of dynastic or inherited control, and dismisses the notion that being in power for any length of time confers credibility for the system.

Crestadoro's theme is that parliamentary governments may not serve all equally unless strict structures are in place. There are always abuses and weaknesses. Governments, like individuals, are subject to the pressures of circumstances. It is a practical necessity that there are always procedures in place so that ministries can be replaced. Freedom of the press is fundamental.

As ever Crestadoro is modest about his ideas, he is not putting forward new principles or truths but applying them in a different way. With a plea to the reader to be patient with the detail, he substantially describes the structure of a system of constitutional government, detailing each department's role.

England is clearly a model for the practical scheme that follows, both for its realised achievements and for its aspirations to national literacy and universal suffrage. Some of the lines Crestadoro pursues may seem odd ramblings but need to be viewed against what was happening at the time. The English Parliament had steadily increased the 'tax on knowledge' to make publishing expensive and to move newspapers out of the reach of radicals and the working classes. The repeal of the tax came in 1861, clearing the way for cheaper production of books, pamphlets and newspapers.

Crestadoro's rather neat idea was for a private and public section for each journal. Only the private part would include advertisements, thus paying for critical free information.

Towards the end of the first part Crestadoro moves from his dry detail to passionate declamation:

> True freedom is distinguished from the false freedom in that while it breaks all the links, the later attaches many others. True freedom destroys the chains of slavery, ignorance, superstition, and despotism in all its disguises, whether holding down a man or class or multitude, and imposes the bonds of order, law, morality, of charity and all the civilizing obligations of society.

He declares that the Church has no right to interfere with the state or with other institutions: his tone is almost aggressive:

> Many people have, in good faith, belief that the Church should lead the State or, at least, there should be a religious cult of the State; but the society, because of religious worship, does not differ from trade associations, industrial, scientific and other social organizations in its object. Like all other institutions, it is entitled to a freedom similar to the common public order law. She has no right to attack other associations having the same object or other, let alone to dominate human society or absorb.

### *Du Pouvoir* – Second Part

The second part is entitled *Souverainte Pontificale ou de l'Organisation Religieuse* and Crestadoro's text is both emotional and practical in looking at a solution that will also be a salvation for the Church. The theme is that giving up temporal power will return the Church to spiritual purity and restore the rightful role. Interestingly, Crestadoro takes a radical position in allowing a free choice of religion. He uses the analogy that people are free to choose their physicians, and it is then their responsibility to choose well. No doctor has the right to force remedies on patients. He compares the role of a sacred Church with that of the librarian: 'They would be curators of the library of heaven, containing all instructions from God, all divine revelations, finally the divine Code of truth and justice – the whole universal law.'

He looks at the dualism of humanity and even debates animals having souls, concluding that they have souls but on a different level: not Catholic dogma.

Crestadoro outlines the practical arrangements for funding the Church once temporal power is surrendered, its roles and relationship with secular power. The best ministers will come to the fore, as the corruption of temporal power will no longer have relevance.

This is both the most structured and the most personal of Crestadoro's works. There are no details of his private life but the values that drive him are revealing. Here is a man who loathes suffering, corruption and the abuse of the poor. He holds liberal views, some surprisingly radical, and has the simple belief that goodness and justice will prevail and humanity see the sense of fair and equitable

arrangements.

Unusually for Crestadoro, there are many passages of direct address or exploration, with examples that clearly have relevance for him. He has no conflict in reconciling his love of God with his fascination for science:

> I carry his image in the Heart from the day he created me. It is there guarded by his own hand. By it I recognize the authenticity of all messages. I recognize also the words that are addressed to me; because they are sweeter than honey, more benevolent than any that were sent to me by the sages and philanthropists of this world.
>
> They do not admit, like myself, that inspiration comes directly from the truth of God. I found that inspiration not only in the sacred books, but also in all other sciences which contain truth in mathematics, physics, technology, social economy, and finally in all other areas of human knowledge.

Crestadoro structures his text on three propositions: that the Pope must himself be free and independent, that he must not be subject to any temporal power, and that his spiritual sovereignty is respected. He considers these in the context of liberty for all people, and then how they can be applied.

He covers a great deal of territory in the pages that follow and there is passionate anger against false priests, wolves clothed as lambs, those who spill blood in the name of religion, hypocrites who convince patriots they are being punished for crimes against God. There are tirades against the superstitious teaching of children, leading them to substitute the trappings for true love of God. At different points he seems to be almost giving a sermon or public speech, denouncing and then persuading.

The few direct references to a context of real place and time come, as in Part 1, with mention of England. Then towards the end, Crestadoro suddenly is addressing the political situation of the Vatican, Italy and Pius IX. He holds up the choices open to Pius and the glorious future if he takes the right path. (Cavour very much echoed this in his speeches).

Crestadoro concludes with a glorious vision of the flourishing garden of free Italy and a world where liberty reigns: and with a powerful denouncement of those who cling on to temporal power. The rhetoric is passionate and sincere; such passages ring with real emotion:

> The biggest pain of my heart, is that when the priest mercenaries have been seized by the same insatiable lust for power, they have made common cause with impious rulers, supporting the tyranny of thrones by detestable plotting under the cloak of religion. In this way, they dare to make themselves equal to God; but in the hour of deliverance of the people they will be forced to recognize that they were the equals of Satan.

## The end of the issue

It was not until 1870 that the visions of Cavour and Crestadoro were realised, not through the Pope being persuaded by eloquent arguments but by the final withdrawal of the foreigners who protected him and by the almost embarrassed action by the Italian Government.

By 1870, the Italian Government was in deep mire, gaining an ill reputation as the new Byzantium, corrupt and decadent. Even when Napoleon III withdrew his troops from Rome with the outbreak of war between France and Prussia, the Italian Government still hoped for a peaceful solution for securing Rome. Finally, patriotic fervour compelled action. A final straw for Victor Emmanuel

might have been that his mistress vowed to withdraw her favours unless he took Rome:

> On the morning of 20 September, Italian artillery punched a hole in the walls of Rome near Porta Pia. The Pope had asked his soldiers to put up token resistance - just enough to show that he was yielding to force - and there were only a few casualties. A white flag was soon flying over St Peter's, and within a day all that remained of the temporal power of the popes was the Vatican.[89]

Crestadoro did not refer to his experience as a priest in *Du Pouvoir Temporel*. By then he had spent nearly thirteen years in England, and obviously had not broadcast his previous role. Writing the work must have been a painful experience; surely Crestadoro's clear personal affirmations of his belief in God and humanity could only have grown from years of debate and conflict.

Whether or not the book did influence Cavour and Menabrea as Crestadoro claimed, it represents his gift to the cause of Italian unification.

[66] 'Obertello A. 'Andrea Crestadoro Giornale di Genova, June 1932' in *Repertorio Bibliografico della storia e della critica della literature italiana da 1932 a 1942* (Rome: Edizioni Roma, 1937)

[67] National Archives (NA hereafter), HO1/130/S014 115536, application 26 March 1866

[68] MA, Letter 70/22 19 May 1870

[69] Alfred Owen Legge, *The Growth of the Temporal Power of the Papacy: a historical review with observations upon the Council of the Vatican* (London: Macmillan, 1870)

[70] William Roscoe Thayer, *The Life and Times of Cavour* (Boston: Houghton, 1911) 2: p.443

[71] Thayer, *The Life and Times of Cavour*, 2: p 446

[72] Thayer, *The Life and Times of Cavour*, 2: p 456

[73] Thayer, *The Life and Times of Cavour*, 2: p. 455

[74] Thayer, *The Life and Times of Cavour*, 2: p. 491

[75] Lucia Ducci, George P. Marsh, *Correspondence: Images of Italy, 1861–1881* (Lanham: Rowman, 2012) p.30

[76] Denis Mack Smith (ed.), *Garibaldi* (Hemel Hempstead: Prentice-Hall, 1969) p.80

[77] Tiziana Oliveri, *La Biblioteca di Garibaldi a Caprera* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2014)

[78] Professor Girogio Montecchi, e-mail to author, 8 October 2015

[79] Claude Pichois, *Auguste Poulet-Malassis L'Editeur de Baudelaire* (Fayard, 1996)

[80] Alessandro Gavazzi, *Sermons ... suivis de l'ouverture des Chambres à Gaëte et du départ de la police: pièces macaroniques. Traduits de l'Italien par F. Mornand* (Paris: Poulet-Malassis, 1861)

[81] Pichois, *Auguste Poulet-Malassi*, p.95

[82] Graham Robb, *Victor Hugo* (London: Picador, 1997) p. 499

[83] Victor Hugo Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University GEN MSS 412 Box 1 Folder 8

[84] E.J.Knapton, 'Some Aspects of the Bourbon Restoration of 1814', *Journal of Modern History*, 4 (December 1934) pp.405-424

[85] Ludovic de Conteson, *Un Agent Royaliste en 1814 Le Baron de la Barthe* (Coulommiers: Brodard, 1910)

[86] Joseph Blanc, *Bibliographie italico-française universelle; ou, Catalogue methodique de tous les imprimés en langue française sur l'Italie ancienne et moderne depuis l'origine de l'imprimerie*, 1475-1885 (Milan: privately printed, 1886)

[87] Leon de Rosny et lese etudes japonaises en France: membreslycos.fr/cherrycell/rosny.htm

[88] Pekka Masonen, *The Negroland revisited : discovery and invention of the Sudanese Middle Ages* (Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2000)

[89] Duggan, *The Force of Destiny*, p.257

# Chapter Five: The Patent Impulsoria

Now that most of the civilised world is busily seeking ways of conserving energy, how about this? The accompanying illustration taken from the Illustrated London News for June 1850, shows the Impulsoria. What happened to it on the way?[90]

## Entrance and Exit

In the 1840s, in the chaos of revolution across Europe, Clemente Masserano produced his invention, a horse-powered locomotive of quixotic ambition, the gloriously-named Impulsoria. He formed a small syndicate, brought the Impulsoria to Paris in 1848, and then a year later took it to London where it ran it at the Nine Elms station in 1850. Only one of the syndicate, Crestadoro, accompanied him to London.

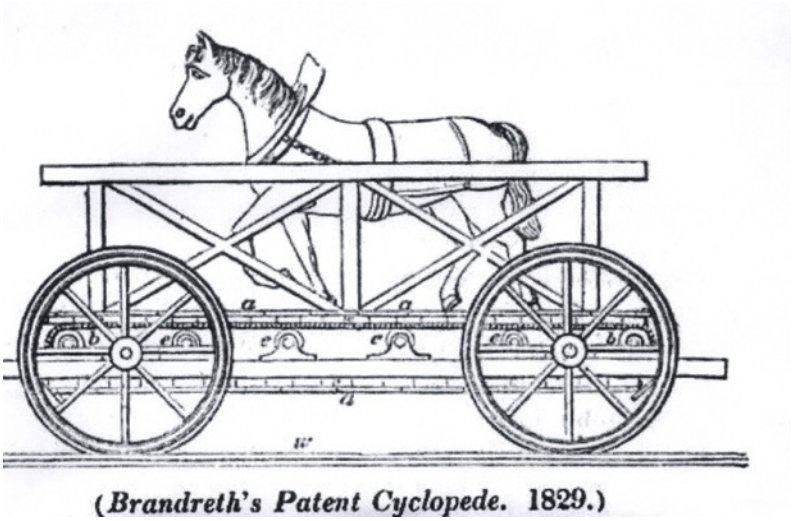


Fig.7 Cycloped

Masserano left, the syndicate dispersed, but Crestadoro remained in England. At the age of forty-one, he had abandoned his priesthood and

unexpectedly settled in a new country. He made a brilliant start as an inventor. Within a year he had patented an improved Impulsoria and brought it to the 1851 Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace.

Was it the scholar, Crestadoro, who gave the machine the evocative and powerful name? It certainly had more of a ring to it than one predecessor, the Cyclopede (or Cycloped in some sources), and for this reason alone might have better captured the public imagination. Visually the Impulsoria was astonishing. Other horse-powered locomotives using treadmills existed but were much less elaborate and designed on the mundane lines of a horse in a cart.

The Impulsoria was doomed to failure. It was too late for a horse-powered machine to contend with steam locomotives, but it did serve to amuse, astonish and entertain. Its memory still occasionally surfaces, thanks in part to the print of its Nine Elms debut on 22 June 1850.[91] This print by an unknown artist, copied across the world, is a stirring portrayal of a curious machine, with its strong horses and somewhat morose looking railwaymen in the garb of the London and South Western livery.

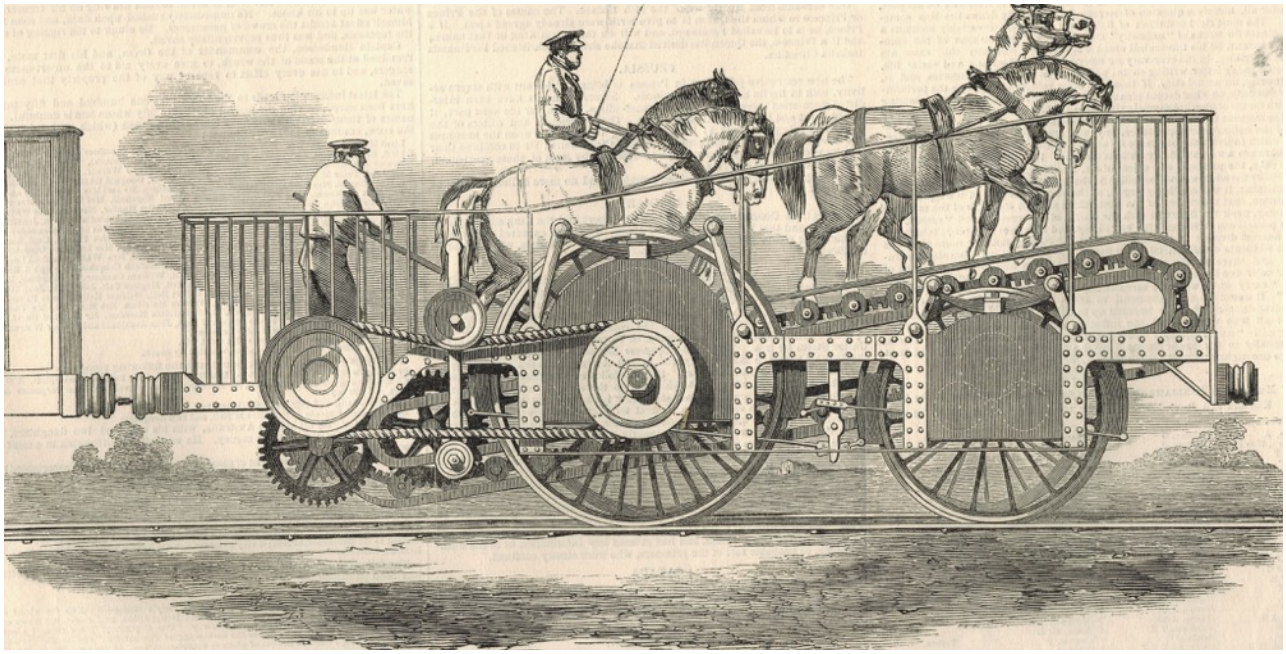

Fig.8 Impulsoria, *Illustrated London News*

Even though the Impulsoria was not steam-powered, the size, complexity, speed and general grandeur of the contraption impressed watchers. The Impulsoria was the best publicised of Crestadoro's mechanical ventures, and it endowed him with some glamour when it ran at the Crystal Palace. Strictly speaking Masserano was the original inventor, though Crestadoro presumably helped in the first design and construction. Not only did Crestadoro improve the machine, but he remained loyal to the concept when Masserano and the others in the syndicate abandoned it.

Sadly, all ended with Crestadoro in court for debt and with the Impulsoria being auctioned off in the yard of a Manchester pub, perhaps to run again in Germany before it exits from the scene.

## The Railway Age

The railway age and the computer age have much in common in their speed of progress across a few decades and in their universal impact. Within three generations both technologies transformed

the world. Countries, towns, trade and individuals who did not embrace or implement these new technologies found themselves in backwaters.

The official opening, on 15 September 1830, of the Liverpool & Manchester steam-hauled, twin-tracked railway line, carrying passengers and goods between two major cities, is widely accepted as the start of the railway age. With eight Stephenson locomotives running, one sad fatality and a speed of thirty-five m.p.h. achieved when Stephenson rushed the dying victim to the doctors, the news went global.

The rest is history, and Britain led the way. It took some years to achieve a national network in Britain, but by 1843 there were around 1,800 miles of track operational.

Railways spread across the world with astonishing speed. Fortunes invested in the railway mania soared and crashed, steam locomotives created panic and consternation, there were massive obstacles of construction to overcome but the new technology was unstoppable. By the 1840s iron roads were present in Europe, Russia, the Americas and Australia. By the end of the century India, Africa, Japan, China and New Zealand had all developed the transport system that underpinned the modern world.

## A Foolish Venture?

In the early days of railways, horses still played a part. Horse-powered vehicles as well as steam locomotives ran briefly on some railway lines. Horses competed with trains on the 1825 Stockton Darlington line, transporting passengers until 1833. George Stephenson designed a horse-powered machine for the Canterbury line in 1827: it was never used as the directors decided on steam power. Stephenson believed that T.S. Brandeth pinched his idea and patented it for his Cyclopede two years later.[92] From 1836 to 1845 horses, not locomotives, worked the Whitby to Pickering line. Horses hauled trains up steep inclines and locomotives needed the help of horses to pull great weights of coal up to the engines and boilers that powered industrial machines.

Yet as early as 1829 the railway was recognised as spelling doom to horses: ‘Stationers’ windows in Manchester were full of pictures of half-starved horses leaning over railings and looking wistfully at a passing train.’[93] Brandeth entered his Cyclopede into the 1829 Rainhill trials, the competition to select the locomotives to run on the Liverpool Manchester line, but this was just seen as a prank.

By the 1840s, locomotives were so developed in power that horses no longer pulled loads on the tracks. For a few more years they still helped to haul on steep gradients and to operate lifting machinery. In the end horses only worked in the shunting yards; some were still there in the last days of steam in England.

Ultimately a horse could not compete on speed or power against a steam locomotive, especially as the engines increased in power and efficiency. There is a limit to how much a horse can pull and, as Christian Woolmar notes, the Industrial Revolution needed ‘a better source of power than the legs and backs of men and beasts.’[94] An average horse will achieve around twenty m.p.h at a gallop: for short periods. George Stephenson’s *Arrow* was outclassing that with thirty-five m.p.h in 1830. Horses required expensive food and were short lived. After the Napoleonic wars, horses were themselves scarce and therefore prohibitively highly priced, an impetus in itself for the development of steam locomotives.

Masserano’s attempt to present the Impulsoria as an alternative to a steam locomotive in Italy, France, England and the United States in the late 1840s seems foolish. His best chance might have been in Italy where the railway network was patchy until unification, but even here his idea was rejected.

## Italian Railways

Ferdinand II, King of the Two Sicilies, was persuaded by the Frenchman, Armand Bayard de la Vingtrie to install a railway between his palaces in Naples and Portici, a five mile distance. So the first Italian railway opened in 1839 and proved immensely popular with around a thousand passengers per day.

Pope Gregory XVI hated the idea of railways: 'chemin de fer, chemin d'enfer' was his famous quip. Like the Duke of Wellington who had feared that it 'would encourage the lower classes to travel about',[95] Gregory saw railways as a source for potential trouble and banned them from the Papal States. His successor in 1846, Pius IX, was all for them, and the central lines spread, with the help of expert British engineers for their own practical experience was inadequate. As Thomas Waghorn reported in 1847 when the Papal States invited concessions:

> I found the plans to consist of exceedingly neat and elaborate drawings, executed with extreme care and trouble, covered with a profusion of detail and figured dimensions and with precisely that appearance which would entirely deceive the unprofessional and induce the belief, which I found prevalent, that they were works of talent and subject for congratulations… The plans were prepared by men without practical experience, but with the most complete ignorance of the subject. It was my duty of dispelling this fair dream.[96]

(Waghorn's comment is striking as it can be applied so well to Crestadoro, whose own fine details and plans were undermined by his inadequate knowledge and experience.)

In 1848, when the syndicate put forward their ideas, a patchwork of railways was just beginning across Italy. Further lines were built in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, important routes laid in Lombardy-Venetia and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The greatest progress was made in Piedmont. Work started in 1844 to link the major port of Genoa with the industrial capital of Turin. The difficulties of the crossing the Apennines and dealing with inclines meant the sections only opened gradually, starting in 1848 and completed with 103 miles of track in 1853. Cavour, enthusiastic for steam-engine power, drove the railway expansion programme in Piedmont, and by 1860 a third of Italy's railway lines were there. The Papal States had to wait until 1856 for their first line.

Italy's railway network did not become properly established until unification in 1861. As well as the usual problems of terrain and climate, Italy had to overcome the confusion of different states, the complications of co-operation with Austria, the under-developed banking systems and lack of a framework for investment. Development was irregular. Even the more dynamic and industrial northern states often lacked connections and horse-drawn coaches had to be used between the networks.

## Horse Power for Italian passes

Masserano was a businessman and he invested both time and money in his Impulsoria. In today's terms there are plenty of cons in his business plan, but what were the pros? Masserano must have identified plus factors in order to commit to the scheme.

(The only other supposition which I must admit I find attractive, is that the Impulsoria was a Trojan Horse, a venture to enable some syndicate members to leave Italy, perhaps on a mission for Cavour.)

What if anything would make the Impulsoria a real proposition?

Masserano's machine had little hope of success in France or England, but in Italy horses were still a

solution for hauling steam locomotives up steep inclines. There is a possibility that the Impulsoria was actually used for this.

Masserano and other members of the syndicate would have been well aware of the struggles with steep inclines.

In the frustrating way that information on the Internet is both garbled and then vanishes, there is a clue that in fact Masserano's machine was applied in practice not just in theory on the Turin to Genoa railway. There was a mention on a site that has now vanished,[97] that the invention of Clemente Masserano was used on the climb from Migliarina to Villanova through Dusino, as the primitive engine from Britain had failed. Four horses were used, an interesting fact in itself as the Impulsoria was designed both for one or two pairs of horses. If the bits of information I retrieved are correct, the machine was modified by the Stephensons at their Newcastle upon Tyne workshops and used at Dusino to pull the locomotives up the incline. Machines were then used on the same principle to pull the locomotives at the uneven Steps of Genoa, the Giovi Pass. The date given for the use at Dusino is up to August 1851.

So the Impulsoria may well have run at Dusino. The Internet piece tellingly included the illustration of the Impulsoria at Nine Elms. A *Morning Chronicle* article of 12 August 1851 described the replacement of horses by locomotives at Dusino: perhaps the end of the Impulsoria in Italy.

(In a follow up article on 19 August the same reporter was full of praise for the Genoa to Turin line, apart from one objection: 'The stations are very numerous, and at each departure the guards sound a trumpet; the consequence is an almost continued duet with the instrument and the steam whistles, which is far from agreeable to the ear.' Samuel Smiles recorded in 1867 that the trumpet for signalling was in use at the Manchester Station 'until a comparatively recent date'.[98] Perhaps Crestadoro heard and enjoyed that reminder of the railways of home.)

All this elusive and scrambled information suggests a dynamically different view of Masserano's machine. It was not a joke but a fair enough attempt at a practical solution to a very real problem of railway construction, that was at its extreme in Italy: the mountain incline.

Until locomotives developed into full power, interim measures of horsepower or cable were valid options. In England, the need for these supports was largely over by the 1840s but the special problems of Italy meant the 'menattrico' did have a place at the end of that decade. Masserano's venture in bringing the machine to France and England was misjudged but is understandable.

## Presentation

Masserano presented his invention to an august body, Accademia Pontificia dei Nuovi Lincei, one of whose members was the esteemed Menabrea. Masserano aimed at securing rights to the invention and enticing the Minister of Agriculture, Commerce and the Navy in its development.

In response the Accademia Pontificia dei Nuovi Lince, at their first session of 7 January 1849 announced there would be an investigation of the invention: it was to be led by Professor R.O. Domenico Chelini and the engineer S.Giovanni Cavalieri S. Bertolo.

In 1848 the members of the Accademia Pontificia dei Nuovi Lince had decided to publish their writings, four annually,[99] hence their report of the 'nuovo Locomozione' was preserved. (The name Impulsoria seems to have emerged when the machine went to England).

The first record of Masserano's invention is in the investigators' three-page report in *Atti dell'Accademia Pontificia dei Nuovi Lincei*. The report was given at the second session of the

Accademia Pontificia dei Nuovi Lincei on 4 February 1849. Exactly where the session was held is obscure, for this was one of the most turbulent periods of the Risorgimento and the prestigious Accademia Pontificia dei Nuovi Lincei had struggled for survival.

This was the first time the members, including Crestadoro, were named:

> Clemente Masserano Pinerolo, director of one industrial establishment located in Turin, together with Mrrs. Carenzi, Crestadoro, Wikliffe, Mignone request demanded rights of the property, for a new locomotion, they devised, and called the system of rapid locomotion nattrila, – for animal power, for every kind of machine to be operated with wheels, both by land and water.

The investigators reported the technical principle in detail and commented on the derivation of the invention, mentioning ancient models, Attwood's machine and Borgnis' work on *Compostition des Machines*. They were lukewarm about the fanciful invention, querying some of the weaknesses of the design (too many wheels, not enough friction), and found it unlikely to be practical or profitable. They pronounced the section on its possible application to waterpower is found to be hopelessly muddled. In conclusion they recommended that the invention should not be supported: the academy accepted this verdict and gave Masserano's machine the thumbs down.

Despite the Academy's rejection, Masserano pressed on with patenting the Impulsoria.

## Masserano's Syndicate

Masserano and other members of the syndicate deposited patents for the horse machine in Europe and America. The movements of the Impulsoria syndicate can be traced from Turin to Paris in 1848, with Masserano and Crestadoro travelling on from Paris (unless they returned to Italy first) to London in 1849.

The French registration of the patent was recorded in the Paris official register and fortunately, the entry was meticulous in giving the names of the syndicate:

> 69 The patent for fifteen years, whose application was filed, March 9, 1848, at the office of the Department Prefecture of the Seine by citizens Wickcliffe the Younger (Robert), Masserano (Clement), Carenzi (Charles), Rocca (Peliegre), Migone (Louis-Barthelemy) and Father Andre Crestadoro, rue de Rivoli, No.18. for a system of rapid locomotive transport by animal power, for all sorts of mechanical transportation through roads, or land, or water.

Clemente Masserano, the inventor and leader of the syndicate, was born in Pinerolo. His parents were probably Carlo Maria Masserano, a 'direttore ecconimico delle milizie' of Pragelato Valley, and Catterina Adelaide Labey. Masserano was a director of a factory in Turin and an inventor of a system to reduce friction for every type of engine with wheels. This information comes from Paola Novaria and Nadia Menusan at Informazioni Bibliografiche in Pinerolo.

In 2011, the 150th anniversary year of the Risorgimento, Masserano was rediscovered with cries of why has this inventor, 'Clemente Masserano invetore dimenitico', been forgotten?[100] There was a flurry of interest in the Impulsoria. Professor Vittorio Marchis included it in his listing of Italian inventions.[101]

Charles Carenzi has already been identified as the translator of Bancroft's *History of America* and linked to Robert Wickcliffe and Crestadoro through that, as well as through Masserano's syndicate. Louis-Barthelemy Migone was listed as a subscriber and a banker in Genoa in *L'Arche D'Alliance,*

*Bulletin de là Société de L'Océanie*.[102] I cannot identify Peliegre Rocca, but there is much to tell of Robert Wickcliffe and his wife, Josephine.

## The Wickliffes

Robert Wickliffe Jr. was Charge d'Affaires at the American Embassy in Turin in 1843, leaving his post in 1847. He was associated with Carenzi in proposing an Italian translation to Bancroft, making himself unpopular with the Italian authorities.

Robert came from a powerful clan. His father was the largest slaveholder in Kentucky and a member of the Lexington & Ohio Railroad, one of the earliest railroads west of the Appalachians, opening with horsepower in 1832 and bringing in steam in 1834. His control of railways earned him the title of the Kentucky Railway King and it seemed likely his son might have inherited his interests. Robert Wickcliffe Jr. died before his father. They were not on good terms, due mainly to the antagonism the Wickliffe family felt towards Robert's Dutch wife, Johanna Josephine Van Houtum.

Wickliffe's widow, according to an account in the *Scientific American* of 1851, took over her husband's interests in the Impulsoria. She had probably been involved earlier on with the syndicate, travelling with her husband and the others to Paris in 1848. How did this very lively lady affect the middle-aged Piarist priest? The fact is that somewhere between Paris and London 'Don Crestadoro' abandoned his priestly title and henceforth named himself as professor or doctor. It is impossible to know whether the change was made through expediency, a long planned decision , an impulse driven by the new world opening up to him, or a mixture of all three with the presence of an attractive woman to perhaps make him reconsider vows of celibacy.

## Our Lady of the Impulsoria

Josephine (her preferred name) was too intriguing not to pursue further, and thanks to the sleuthing of William J. Marshall of the University of Kentucky Archives, a fascinating tale emerged.[103] Josephine had left her Dutch family to pursue the career of professional painter. Dr. Hanna Klarenbeek identified a mention: 'I came across Josephine van Houtum only once in an exhibition catalogue of the 'Exhibition of Living Masters' (in Dutch, 'Tentoonstelling van Levende Meesters') in 1844 in Rotterdam. I include two scans of the catalogue for you. She exhibited a landscape while she lived in Paris, the painting was for sale.'[104]

She met Robert Wickliffe Jr., who clearly adored her. The marriage with Robert took place on 7 April 1846 at the Prussian Embassy in Paris, Josephine being given away by the Chevalier Biscarra. Robert wrote admiringly in his letters of his wife's talents. She was accepted as a diplomat's wife: she came from a good background in Rotterdam and was accustomed to high society. Her charms must have made her a renowned figure in royal and diplomatic circles for she was chosen to present the American Standard to the French Government, from the very same address, No 18 Rue de Rivoli, that the syndicate afterwards used.

The Wickcliffes moved to Turin where Robert was an attache at the American Embassy.

Robert Wickcliffe Sr. wrote affectionate letters to the daughter-in-law he had not met, coaxing her to influence his son to write more frequently. His letters to Robert are loving but full of demands. His equally controlling daughter, the redoubtable Margaret, wrote to urge them home.

Their warmth evaporated when they realized she was not an heiress. Margaret lamented: 'the disastrous effects of her older brother marrying a Dutch heiress whose fabled inheritance never

materialized.'[105] Her personality and habits did not impress in Kentucky.

An intriguing unpublished paper by Frances Keller Swinford, great granddaughter of Josephine's maternal nephew, Rudolf John Julius deRoode,[106] gives a personal glimpse of a lady too well used to the frivolous courts of European royalty to conform to Kentucky standards. Her habits of boiling ham in champagne and wearing real lace on her underwear proved too much, though oddly, ham in champagne is now cited on the Internet as a traditional Virginian recipe.

After Robert died in 1850, Josephine, only twenty-five years old, was pursued by the Wickliffes who were determined to break her husband's will. He had left everything to his beloved wife: a townhouse, an estate, a farm, forty-two slaves and business interests, including the Impulsoria investment. In 1852, Josephine married Robert's friend, a Kentucky lawyer and state senator, Francis Troutman of Bourbon County. Soon, she was soliciting the court for a separation settlement (quite common at the time) and expressing her desire to return to Europe. She died in Paris, in the arms of her lover Captain Hippolyte Michaux, on 30 September 1859, pursued by a multitude of creditors. After her death there was extensive wrangling between her husband and Captain Michaux. Her possessions were scattered amongst pawnbrokers. Poignantly, Troutman tried to reclaim Robert Wickliffe Jr.'s sword from the debacle.

Josephine gives a siren call, and it is easy to imagine our lady of the Impulsoria inspiring operas or novelettes.

## Exploitation of Robert Wickliffe Jr.

It is difficult to escape the inference from Wickliffe's letters[107] to his father that Masserano had zoned in on a young rich American, restless with diplomatic life and ready to embark on an exciting adventure with his remarkable new wife.

On 31 March 1846 he wrote to his father in great excitement, explaining the wonderful opportunities that have opened up to him for making a 'handsome fortune' by sponsoring the patents for Masserano's invention across Europe and America. He admitted that when he first heard the idea it made him laugh, but when he saw the demonstration he was impressed and became a supporter:

> Calculate the value of an invention which saves expense of one half of all the wagons carriages, stage coaches, locomotives and steam boats in Europe and the United States for fifteen years. I myself laughed at the idea when it was first proposed me, but when I saw it, the principle was so simple that I was immediately convinced of its feasibility and importance.

He plans on how he will use the 'little money I have saved' to purchase the patents but will need funds released from home.

The draft contract, signed on 18 March 1846, is preserved with the letter. It consists of eleven detailed clauses between Clement Masserano 'Machinis', Charles Parvrensi, Under-Secretary of Royal Finances of Sardinia, native of Albernga Genoa and the Honourable Robert Wickliffe. Masserano is named as the inventor. They promise that full specifications and explanations of the new machine will be given by 1 September 1846. Wickliffe was to have full power of attorney from that date, and to be responsible for all the expenses of obtaining patents and promoting it in the different countries. In return, he keeps half the proceeds for Great Britain and Ireland, two thirds for the continent of Europe and half for the United States. The tenth clause refers to a French Government report which, if it is unfavourable, means the whole contract is dissolved and

Wickliffe ‘shall return models and designs and Keep the Secret’.

Being involved in the secret of the new machine clearly won over Robert Wickliffe Jr.: his letter shows a schoolboy’s enthusiasm for the exciting conspiracy. The contract seems fair enough but the risk is all Wickliffe’s. He is to promote the invention, pay for all the expenses and, though the contract does not mention this, as sole investor bear all the losses. It is interesting that others are not named at this stage, though they appear three years later in the 1849 report already described. Presumably, Crestadoro was brought in in this period for his technical expertise and language skills. Unfortunately, the archive does not possess the reply from Robert Wickcliffe Sr., but from his son’s next letter, addressed from Naples on July 1 1846, it is apparent his father was both concerned and angry at the venture.

Robert Wickliffe Jr. did his best to convince his father how sharp he was being, emphasising he would have an opinion from a French Government Scientific Committee before ‘I am required to pay over one cent’. If the opinion is unfavourable he will go to law to withdraw from the contracts. Endearingly, he makes reference to a friend, naively trying to impress his father: ‘In addition to this [the French Government report] the inventors have recently consented that the invention may be submitted for his opinion to Mr. Powers my friend and who understands mechanics as well as he does sculpture.’

This must have been the renowned sculptor, Hiram Powers who had moved to Italy from the United States in 1837, remaining there till his death in 1873. (Incidentally, Hiram Powers' sculpture, *The Greek Slave*, caused a sensation at the Great Exhibition).

Robert Wickliffe Jr. repeated in subsequent letters the line that there was no risk to himself, that the opinions of scientific men would guide all, that he might make a fortune but no loss, and that his father was wrong to think the cost was 20,000 dollars, it was only around 3,000. Obviously Robert Wickliffe Jr. regretted he had ever raised the subject to his father and was trying to play it all down.

The Wickliffes returned to the States in 1849 and Robert became busy with the law, developing his political career and with urging the cause of education and libraries.

The University of Kentucky Archives record that Robert Wickcliffe Jr. registered the Impulsoria in the States. Crestadoro is named as having translated the Italian for the paperwork.

## The Impulsoria in Paris

On 9 March 1848, some or all of the syndicate members were residing at no 18 Rue de Rivoli; at least they were registered there when they took out the French patent for the Impulsoria. Whether the apartment was rented by the Wickliffes or whether it was a residence for American Embassy staff is unknown. The address is a smart one: the tall, elegant block of apartments with its high windows and ornate balconies still lines the Rue de Rivoli, more or less opposite the Hotel de Ville.

1848 is famous as the year when revolution broke out across Europe. In Paris Louis Philippe, the last Bourbon monarch, was deposed in February and Louis Napoleon Bonaparte became president of the Second Republic. Strategies were needed to embed the republic, to unify the turbulent nation and to heal the conflicts of city and country. An immense exposition was devised, held in the exhibition hall of the Champs-Elysees. Like all other exhibitions in Europe it was limited to national exhibitors. It was the internationalist, Prince Albert, who broke the mould in the spirit of global sharing and co-operation: the 1851 Great Exhibition in London was open to all.

Masserano and Crestadoro left in May 1849, but did any of the syndicate remain in Paris to

network with other engineers, bankers and financiers and to visit the Exhibition in June 1849? The mixture of up-to-date developments in both agriculture and industry that was the predominant theme of the Exhibition might have meant a good forum for animal-powered contrivances.

Presumably, the French Government Scientific report on the Impulsoria that Robert Wickliffe Jr. referred to in his letters was favourable, as the patents did continue, but I have found no trace of the Impulsoria being used or demonstrated anywhere in France.

## Crestadoro comes to England

Masserano and Crestadoro travelled from Ostend to Dover, arriving there on 30 May 1849, as recorded on the alien landing certificates. The South Eastern railway catered for the cross-channel passengers using Dover, taking them on tortuous routes to London Bridge. It was reputed to be a terrible service, later notorious for the horrific accident to the Folkestone to London boat train at Staplehurst Viaduct on 17 June 1865, which traumatised Charles Dickens.

The Impulsoria was presumably carried as freight. Companies regularly transported carriages, hounds, cattle, coffins (the London Necropolis or ‘stiffs express’ as it was known), tons of coal, and food to swell the markets of the cities.

The details of Crestadoro’s life now take on a more concrete form through his addresses and contacts.

The first sure point where Crestadoro can be fixed is on 9 July at 7 Alfred Place, Bedford Square, London. It is from this address that he first registered as a reader at the BM.

His movements can be traced in London from the renewals of this registration. After this, on 1 January 1850, he registered his ticket from 8 Knight Place, Wandsworth Road, and apart from a move to Salford in 1851 (from where he still maintained his vital link with the BM), he stayed south of the river in London for the next three years, only moving to the Bloomsbury realms of printing, scholarship and reform in 1854, turning up on 30 August near the BM at 16 Millman Street, Bedford Row.

His south of the river addresses reflect his ambition to make a living as an inventor; he is amongst engineers, railwaymen, workshops, factories and locomotives. He moved from 5 Harleyford Road, Vauxhall (where he renewed his ticket on October 12 1852) to 5 Darlington Place, Vauxhall where he lived from 12 October 1852 until at least 26 April 1853. He was then at 4a Claylands Road, off Clapham Road. This was a landscape of grime, industry, wharfs, warehouses, battling steamboat touts, junctions, stations, bridges and crisscrossing lines. Nearby Battersea was known as ‘the sink hole of Surrey’: ‘Little Hell’ and ‘Hell Corner’ were the landmarks.[108] These houses have survived: small, narrow, early Victorian terraces, redolent of standard lodging houses.

## Nine Elms

The Impulsoria ran at Nine Elms on 22 June 1850, explaining why Crestadoro was living in the area. Most of the streets have now vanished, obliterated by bombing, demolition and the building of the New Covent Garden Market but there is enough to indicate that Crestadoro was keeping as close as possible to the Nine Elms terminus.

This map is from Joseph Cross's *New Plan of London*[109], showing Vauxhall Bridge, Nine Elms and South Lambeth in 1847.

Nine Elms was built in 1834 as the start of the fourth major London railway, the London &

Southampton Railway, soon renamed the London & South Western Railway (L&SWR). Nine Elms lay between Wandsworth Road and Windmill pier: the extensive area was covered in platforms, engine and carriage workshops, turntables, sheds, and yards for carriages and cabs. The Act that enabled this railway specified that horses must be used to cross from Nine Elms Lane to the river: horses also proved a necessary aid in getting the early primitive locomotives up the station incline.

Fig.9 Vauxhall Bridge, Nine Elms and South Lambeth, Joseph Cross, *New Plan of London* (3rd ed., 1847)

The elegant, neo-classical Nine Elms station, designed by Sir William Tite, opened in 1838, but closed to passengers in 1848 when the line was extended to Waterloo. It was still used occasionally by Queen Victoria and VIPs: there is an engraving of Garibaldi's reception at Nine Elms on 23 April 1864. Nine Elms also continued as a depot and engine works and presumably was open for hire by people wanting to run trials.

John Viret Gooch (a reputedly corrupt superintendent hated by striking railwaymen) was replaced at Nine Elms by Joseph Beattie, late in 1850. The Impulsoria ran at Nine Elms before Gooch left; whether it was still there when Beattie came is unknown. Beattie was a greatly respected engineer and locomotive designer, rebuilding several of Gooch's trains and remaining at Nine Elms until his death in 1871.

Whether Masserano paid for the trial or whether he had connections with L&SWR directors or engineers is a matter of conjecture. Hamilton Ellis, in his history of the South Western Railway gives the fullest account, but no sources for his information: 'Goodness knows what Mr. Gooch made of it, but he was apparently polite to Masserano and gave him every facility. No Impulsoria were ordered by the London and South Western Railway, but the machine deserves respect, if only because its axles had roller bearings.'[110]

## *Illustrated London News*

The Impulsoria did not pass unnoticed by the public, as the extensive coverage and engraving in the 22 June 1850 issue of the *Illustrated London News* indicate. As well as the stunning picture, which oddly shows four horses working the Impulsoria when the report describes two, the article gives a detailed technical account. The fact that the Impulsoria was working the incline where L&SWR

used horses in the early days, echoes the possible use of the machine at Dusino. The text of the article was reproduced or adapted in various forms in articles across the world:

> By the simple manner in which the horses exercise their moving power on the new machine, they can work easily the usual time (commonly about eight hours a day). During these eight hours, the Impulsoria can run at least over thirty miles eight times; and as four horses do not cost much more than two shillings each per day, it would be an expense of eight shillings only, instead of £6 on account of coke only, the cost of which is sixpence each mile run.[111]

The writer was surprisingly enthusiastic, and in the context of the existing use of horses on the Nine Elms incline, the Impulsoria must have seemed feasible. Fire destroyed the early records of L&SWR, and I cannot discover the exact date when horses were no longer used on the infamous incline.

Interestingly, another observer was very definite that only two horses were used at Nine Elms:

> The new machine, whose inventor is Signor Clemente Masserano, from Pignerol, Piedmont, has been brought from Italy to England and deposited at the Nine-elms terminus of the South-Western Railway. It has been made for two horses only, and they work it very well on the pedivella. More than thirty wagons were experimentally drawn by it up the very inclined line of the station, For working up and down the station, a waggon is fastened to it, when it attains a speed of seven miles an hour; and it is calculated that an engine of two horses more will run at a speed superior to that of a steam-engine ; but the driving horses do not change direction or movement. They can be instantly stopped, without stopping the machine; and the machine can likewise be stopped while the horses continue to walk on the pedivella, without transmitting motion to the leading wheels.[112]

Two horses or four horses; certainly no such chariot ever ran again on the railways of Britain. Perhaps Masserano stayed on for a time with Crestadoro, but basically his name now vanishes and Crestadoro became the last champion of the epic machine.

## Yorkshire

The *Yorkshire Gazette* of 3 August 1850 reported the half yearly meeting of the directors and shareholders of the Malton and Driffield Junction Railway Company. One member raised the issue of horse power in the topical context of the Impulsoria, but was speedily brushed aside:

> Mr. Reynard then asked if the directors had made themselves acquainted with the ‘impulsoria’?
>
> The Chairman said they had through Mr. Dickens, who had inspected that machine and reported to the directors.
>
> Mr. Dickens said he did not think that the machine was practicable, and
>
> Mr. Birkinshaw said that it was not a new scheme, having been tried in 1829 on the Manchester and Liverpool line.

There is no evidence of any other company even mentioning the strange machine at Nine Elms.

## The American Patent

In the July 13 1850 issue, the *Scientific Americ*an had waxed merry over the report from London on the Patent Impulsoria:

> The number of the 'Illustrated London News,' for June 22nd contains an engraving and description of a new patent machine to supersede the locomotive, and to be worked by animals on a railway. It was invented a short time since, in Italy, and has been exhibited on the South Western Railway, England. The inventor is Signor Clement Masserano, of Piedmont. The invention is one of 'Wheeler's American Horse Powers,' applied to principal wagons on a railway. And such is the present state of invention in Italy - the land of Galileo. Well, how the mighty are fallen.[113]

Robert Wickliffe, Jr. died on 29 August 1850, and his widow took over his affairs. Masserano's American patent was registered on 7 October 1851 as No. 8417 at the United States Patent Office, and the witnesses were cited as 'R. Wickliffe, Jr.' and 'Andr. Crestadora'. As one was by now dead and the other in England, the witnessing must apply to when the patent was first drawn up. The patent was reproduced in the *Scientific American*.[114]

The *Scientific American* must have made many inventors flinch as they read the brutal comments on their precious designs. The Impulsoria patent came in for a second roasting:

> This patent was granted, we suppose, on account of its novelty. It is no doubt novel to disentomb some ancient Assyrian Bull, and we suppose that, as Layard has recently disentombed one of these gentry, this invention is brought to be yoked to the horns of the Oriental Mammal. We can conceive of no other good reason why a patent was granted for an ox impulsoria for railroads. For a view of an animal impulsoria, we refer our readers to Brandreth's Patent Cyclopede, page 619 'Herbert's History of the Steam Engine.[115]

Curiously, the patent was the first to be registered in America by an Italian: this was brought to light through recent interest in Masserano in the anniversary year of the Risorgimento.[116]

## Rural Niche?

From a Wisconsin journal[117] came a serious view of the Impulsoria:

> the cost cannot be one quarter of the locomotive engine, and the keep of the horses but a small item compared with the continual consumption of fuel, oil, and the delay for wooding and watering. The public would be gainers by a cheaper rate of passage fees - safety against explosions - of fire in the cars, and on road sides, fence and forests - and the saving the wood of the country, which is now disappearing at a fearful rate. -[Rural New Yorker].

The early debates of horse versus locomotive in England had covered the same considerations of fuel, costs and dangers and these were pertinent in America before coal and steel became widely sourced. The lament over the vanishing woodlands is a rare concern. It is interesting to find that Wisconsin was an area where horse- powered machines were used even into the twentieth century, perhaps the last application of the Impulsoria.

An 'American Horse Power' was exhibited at the Royal Agricultural Society Show in 1857. It was manufactured near Pickering but use did not spread in England, as there was already a range of horse engines in agriculture. The description in the catalogue of the largest supplier, J.I. Case and Co. of Racine, unsurprisingly, of Wisconsin, seems familiar: 'In each case the horses were harnessed into the machine side by side. The moving platform was made of planks of maple fastened together by bands of steel gear teeth on each side. These gears engaged with gear wheels on a main shaft at the high end. The main shaft carried the large pulley wheel by which the farm machinery was powered.'[118]

This looks very much like a copy of the Impulsoria.

## Australia

In Australia, the Messrs. Ham Brothers, copper-plate engravers and lithographic printers, published *The Illustrated Australian Magazine*, known popularly as *Ham's Magazine*. The sketches recorded contemporary Australia as well as topics 'affording a flutter of excitement to the old world'. Together with such wonders as the Assyrian sculptures, the Franklin expedition, the Britannia Tubular bridge, there appeared the Impulsoria. The artist signed the sketch as BAW. Clearly it had been copied from the *Illustrated London News*.

Writing in 1881 about *Ham's Magazine* 'J.B.' was totally dismissive of the Impulsoria: 'which was introduced to the colonists as a method of multiplying horse power on a principle which, had it been sound, would have revolutionized machinery, but which faded from men's minds so soon as it became apparent that a transparent fallacy underlaid all the preliminary calculations.'[119] Infuriatingly, he did not spell out this fatal flaw.[120]

## Crestadoro in Salford

Crestadoro moved to Salford, residing there at 22 Peel Street in 1851, as revealed by his correspondence. It was only by chance I discovered the reason.

In the 1851 issue of *Il Palmaverde,* under the Progresso Scientifico section, there is a colourful account of Masserano and his 'nouovo sistema di locomotion a men attrite': 'And when the importance of our Masserano's new system became clear, the happy land did its best with the invention and committed work on the machinery of the animal-powered locomotive to the engineer Dunn of Manchester.'[121]

The article was probably inspired by the entry of the Impulsoria at the Crystal Palace. But the significant information for me was 'ingegnere Dunn di Manchester'.

The only Dunn who fits the frame is T. Dunn of Windsor Bridge, near Manchester, described as an inventor and manufacturer in the *Great Exhibition Official Catalogue, Class V*. In 1851, Windsor Bridge was a vast expanse of engineering and railway works, existing in its own right in the boundary lands of Salford and Manchester. Fittingly, the boy who later became famous for his railway guides, George Bradshaw, was born at Windsor Bridge in 1801. Salford was always overshadowed by its neighbour and 'Near Manchester' was the usual description for Windsor Bridge. The final piece in the identification of T. Dunn as the engineer of the Impulsoria came from looking at an old map of Salford. Peel Street, where Crestadoro lived, leads directly into Windsor Bridge. One Salford historian commented: 'Crestadoro, by living in Peel Street, was in Pendleton, the 'nicer' part of Salford'.[122] It was in Salford that Crestadoro prepared the Impulsoria for entry to the Great Exhibition. He also put his name forward for an Austrian enterprise.

## Semmering Railway

The Semmering railway in Austria is now a UNESCO World Heritage site – and still a functional line, 150 years after its construction. It was the first mountain railway in Europe built with a standard gauge and the project was massively challenging with difficult terrain and spectacular gradients to be tackled by a network of tunnels and viaducts.

Construction took place between 1848 and 1854: a competition was held for a design of locomotive to run on it. The Austrian correspondent in the *Morning Post* of 31 March 1851 noted the entrants

from Britain:

> A prize of 20,000 ducats having been offered for the best locomotive to cross the Semmering mountains, the following Englishmen appear first on the list as competitors:— Ist. Andrew Crestadoro, Windsor-bridge Iron Works, near Manchester; 2d, David Gilmour and James Gyde, Vulcan Iron Company, London; 3d, Barrows, Darnston, and Morris, London; and, 4th, John Cockeril, Seraing. The essay is to take place towards the end of July.

Only the John Cockeril entry went forward from this group. Four entrants were chosen altogether and four locomotives were built but did not prove reliable.

There are many images of this spectacular railway on the Internet, and Crestadoro's audacity in entering this competition can only be admired. The Impulsoria after all was born of steep mountain inclines.

## Entry

In the Manchester Library Archives there are two letters from Crestadoro to Thomas Worthington, the young aspiring architect who had been appointed as secretary to the Manchester and Salford Committee of exhibitors. Worthington, who had travelled around France and Italy during the perilous times of 1848 and 1849, was given the appointment on the strength of reporting on the Paris Exhibition. He also sketched the Hotel de Ville near where the Impulsoria syndicate stayed and it is tempting to think he and Crestadoro might have met in Paris and discussed the invention. Years later, Crestadoro renewed his acquaintance with Worthington who became prominent in Manchester both for his buildings and social reform. Crestadoro's first letter to Worthington on 27 January 1851, was merely a request for printed entry forms. In his letter of 31 January 1851, also addressed from 22 Peel Street, Salford, Andrew Crestadoro, as he signed himself, offered to share, presumably space and/or expenses, with other exhibitors:[123]

> Being this moment prevented from calling at your office I beg to inform you in respect to your favour of the 29 inst that I should be ready to combine with the exhibitors who may it desire. If the Local Committee having managed so satisfactorily every thing connected with the exhibitions and knowing personally every exhibitor could arrange also this combination I am ready from my part to agree the terms which may be by the Committee arranged as I am quite sure they will be reciprocally reasonable and proportional.

The need to make economies supports the idea that Masserano had by now departed the scene and that Crestadoro was financing himself. There is no mention of Masserano in England after the Nine Elms trial.

## The Crystal Palace

The impact of the 1851 Great Exhibition still resonates. It was truly an innovation in so many spheres and marked a change in the world, not the least that from 1851 onwards England lost her supremacy as the foremost industrial nation. The magical palace of arching halls of glass and iron, covering 990,000 square feet, soaring to 108 feet in the central transept, entranced and enchanted, drawing in visitors from all over the globe, inspiring school boys to run away and one ancient woman, Mary Kelynack, to walk nearly 300 miles there from Cornwall. The variety of exhibits was overwhelming: newspapers fed off the Crystal Palace for the whole summer, and ever since the first days it has generated a huge body of literature.

The most famous image of the 1851 interior remains the fairytale view of the opening on May 1, declared a public holiday for the occasion. The royal family, Victoria in pink silk, silver and diamonds, the other ladies in white, the towering elm trees, the clusters of palms, the fountain, the richly robed dignitaries, including the innocent Chinese junk captain who turned up uninvited, and was taken for a Chinese mandarin. I remember seeing this picture as a child and wondering where so magical a scene had taken place. Somehow, the Crystal Palace Exhibition became a promise of peace, of unification across classes, and an experience of wonder that transformed lives. The twentieth-century writer, Howard Spring, known primarily for his Manchester novels, based *The Houses In Between*[124] on this very theme. Not all were entranced: Charles Dickens could not bear the profusion of junk, and the teenage William Morris sat outside in a sulk.

Railway travel played a massive part in the excursions to the Crystal Palace and boomed from the new trade. One cartoon by George Cruickshank entitled *Manchester in 1851* shows the city totally deserted, with all the inhabitants supposedly gone to London. Prince Albert had courted the industrial north from the first idea of the scheme and the mission was overwhelmingly successful. No government money was used: the exclusion of political control made it truly a people's event. Of all the literature on the Great Exhibition, the one which best captures the excitement, frenzy and scale of the event is Michael Leapman's book *The World for a shilling - how the great exhibition of 1851 shaped a nation*.[125] Reading this, it is understandable how momentous it must have been to be an exhibitor and how eagerly committees were organised to represent their districts, from industrial city down to rural parish. This was the history in the making, a glory that entranced and embraced multitudes.

## Exhibit 557

The engineer, T. Dunn, may have advised Crestadoro to become a member of the Manchester and Salford Committee. T. Dunn's own entry was number 618 in Class V and is described as 'Apparatus for removing carriages from one line of rails to another.' The exhibit consisted of scale models and drawings. T. Dunn must have been successful, for his firm continued in various forms through the twentieth century.

Crestadoro's exhibit was number 557 in Class V and he described himself as 'Crestadoro, Professor Andrew, 22 Peel Street, Salford'. His description of the exhibit is as follows:

'Model of a machine for applying animal power to the working of railways, consisting of a carriage on which animals are placed to work the driving-wheels, with illustrated drawings, showing recent improvements by the exhibitor.'

There was a huge display of machines in motion, placed in the north section near the structure that held steam boilers to drive them. Other machines ran outside the palace, including vast steam-powered looms. Michael Leapman writes of this section:

> There was plenty more here for railway enthusiasts. This new form of mass transport, without which not half as many people would have been able to visit the Exhibition, was celebrated with dozens of impressive locomotives and rolling stock, devices for track-laying and signalling, as well as one design for 'railways in the streets', later known as trams.[126]

There were in addition many horse-drawn carriages. As Michael Leapman remarks, these would never compete with the railways so the manufacturers tried to rival with comforts: noiseless rubber wheels, glass domes for views, guards to prevent mud splashing, one shaped as a white seashell, as

well an omnibus with anti theft devices.

The Impulsoria seems to have captured the imagination even amongst this fantastic cornucopia.

A curious book by Christopher Hobhouse[127] celebrated the Crystal Palace in a light- hearted and ironic fashion and, like Michael Leapman, he takes the reader round the aisles to join in the fun, using contemporary drawings to illustrate the whole. Hobhouse was fascinated by the Machinery section, recognising how vitally in twenty years steam-power had transformed England: 'Steam was a living thing, a wild romance. There seemed no limits to its power. So the huge oscillating mass of iron in the northern aisle drew greater crowds than all the treasures of the courts of fine arts.'[128]

In the midst of the machines for direct use, which included horse-drawn vehicles, locomotives, carriages, signals, brakes, turntables, Christopher Hobhouse found the Impulsoria:

> The inventions were of widely varying importance. One of the most exciting was Professor Crestadoro's Impulsoria. This was a railway locomotive the driver of which was mounted on horseback, and controlled a team of four horses with whip and reins. The horses, progressing along an endless belt, transmitted power by means of variable gears to the wheels. On highest gear, it was expected to reach a speed of sixty miles an hour, and the principle had been successfully tried at Nine Elms Station.

One reviewer of Hobhouse's book included the Impulsoria as an example: 'the Duke of Wellington was daily mobbed by those who joined him in admiring the Rev. Henry Jones's Patent Acolyte, the "Mathematical" Underwear, the Silent Alarm Clock, and Professor Crestadora's [sic] "Impulsoria" or equine locomotive. It was democracy's first great outing…'[129]

Jorge Casimiro, in *Exposicoes Universais: Londres 1851*, imagined himself strolling round the Crystal Palace and attributed Crestadoro with the invention of the Impulsoria:

> In the same section you can see an unusual invention of Professor Crestadoro: the 'Impulsoria'. This is a locomotive in which the driver, holding tightly to the reins and whip, drives a 'quadriga' [team of 4 horses] in the traditional manner. The energy of the quadrupeds' sixteen feet was transmitted to the locomotive's wheels by means of a belt and various levers. Hence, the expression 'horse power' was well applied. Professor Crestadoro's 'Impulsoria' maintained 90kph in railway tests.[130]

Moving up to four horses obviously much enhanced the dramatic spectacle of the Impulsoria, as well as the force and speed.

The *Illustrated London News* Nine Elms article of 22 June 1850 and these reminiscences of the Impulsoria at the Crystal Palace, ensure that the machine has never been entirely forgotten. In the end it is Crestadoro's name that becomes associated with it as well as that of its inventor, Masserano.

After much debate the Crystal Palace was dismantled and reconstructed on the parklands of Penge Common, Sydenham, in south London. Joseph Paxton 'never a man to think small'[131] enlarged it considerably, and Queen Victoria opened it in 1854 (and the glorious fountains in 1856). Crestadoro returned to Crystal Palace with another contrivance in 1868.

## Improvement Patent

Crestadoro produced his own patent in 1853: *GB300/1852 Letters Patent to Professor Andrew Crestadoro, of Genoa, in Italy, but now resident in Adelphi Place, Salford, in the County of*

*Lancaster, for the Invention of 'Certain Improvements in Impulsoria or Machinery for Applying Animal Power to Railways, Waterways, and Common Roads, and to other Mechanical Purposes, Part of which Improvements relate to Railways and other Carriages, to Buffers, Springs, Breaks, and Chains, and in the Propelling Vessels Across Liquid Elements. Sealed the 13th January 1853, and dated the 8th October 1852.'*

Comparing this patent with Masserano's American patent is a technical task well beyond me, and the only conclusion I can draw is that Crestadoro has added trimmings, the suspension and supports that were a critical part of railway development. I wondered about 'some improvements' and asked the Patents experts at the BL if they knew why this approach was found so often in nineteenth century patents. They could not enlighten me but I found the explanation in John Hewish's study of the Patent Office Library (POL), *Rooms near Chancery Lane*. Apparently this was a standard way of avoiding litigation.[132] The drawings Crestadoro included look familiar, from those given in Masserano's patent.

## Survival of Crestadoro's machine?

After the Crystal Palace Great Exhibition, Crestadoro gradually turned to new occupations in London, teaching languages, indexing and setting up as an information agent. His hopes for earning a living as an inventor were not realised, though he never lost his obsessions.

What on earth could he do with the heavy encumbrance of the machine itself? Presumably Crestadoro would have paid removal and storage costs. There is a dramatic account in *The Observer* of 23 October 1851 of the dispersal of the exhibits from the Crystal Palace, including the rolling out of monstrous locomotives. Eighteen horses were needed to pull a Great Western twenty-seven ton locomotive to Paddington.

Even worse, I discovered Crestadoro in debt to T. Dunn who took him to court to reclaim the costs. This is the account in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* of Saturday 21 August 1852:

> Thomas Dunn and Another v. Andrea Crestadora [sic]. An undefended action to recover about £720, the amount of two promissory notes and the balance of an account, for goods supplied by the plaintiffs, proprietors of the Windsor-bridge Iron Works, Salford, to the defendant, an Italian, in the construction of machine termed the impulsoria, which he had invented, and intended by it to displace all the locomotives now in use in the country. Verdict for the plaintiffs, £725 10s 6d.

The sneer at the Impulsoria must have hurt, and the sum is enormous; according to the National Archives convertor, equivalent to around £42,464. Following this, it looks as if the bailiffs took possession on Thomas Dunn's behalf and sold the machinery at auction. This is the advertisement from the *Manchester Guardian*.[133]

> Sale of an Impulsoria or Locomotive Engine.
>
> By Mr. Thomas on Tuesday, September 21, 1852, at the Waterloo Hotel, Piccadilly, Manchester, at five o'clock in the evening.
>
> A Valuable Impulsoria or Locomotive Engine, constructed to be worked by horsepower, is particularly adapted for countries where coals are scarce, or could be altered at a small cost for stationary work.
>
> For cards to view, apply to Mr. Hasle, Waterloo Hotel, Piccadilly, Mr. Newton, sheriff's

officer, 15, Queen-street ; or the Auctioneer, 6, Brazennose-street.

Poor Pegasus, stripped of its wings in the backyard of a Manchester pub.

## Berlin

Hopefully, the Impulsoria did not go for scrap. If I have deciphered the muddled information correctly, the Impulsoria had at least had one more run, in the streets of Berlin in 1853, before vanishing altogether from history.

The first part of the jigsaw was raised by J. R. Day in his article *Impulsoria at the Nine Elms* in the October 1960 issue of *Railway World*:[134]

> Many readers will have seen reproductions of a crayon drawing by J. H. Maronier of a four-horse locomotive designed by Steinheil of Munich in the early 1850s. Maronier's drawing is based on an illustration in Die Kinderschuhe der Verkehrsmittel by F. M. Feldhaus and has long been accepted as giving the true origin of this unusual locomotive - itself owing much to T. S. Brandreth's Cycloped of Rainhill Trials fame. The four-horse locomotive, known as Impulsoria, was shown in Berlin in 1853.
>
> Only a couple of years ago, while collecting material for a new book (which is now too late to alter), I verified the above details from several authoritative sources and accepted them without question. It was with some surprise, therefore, that in turning over a box of old Press cuttings recently, I came across a detailed drawing of Impulsoria on a cuttings sheet labelled 'From a periodical of June, 1850.' I have now identified the periodical as being the Illustrated London News.

Day concludes his article with the key question: 'there is the evidence - but where does Steinheil of Munich fit in?' Where indeed? The Archive Deutsches Museum confirmed that there is no link with Carl August von Steinheil, a famous inventor and scientist, beyond his brief interest in a horse-powered locomotive railways. This never evolved beyond some sketches and theories and there is no mention in his papers of any knowledge of Masserano's Impulsoria.

So from all this it is clear Steinheil did not invent or even exhibit the Impulsoria, and the confusion arises from F.M.Feldhaus' original error of describing Maronier's sketch as depicting Steinheil's Impulsoria. John Day repeated the error in his book, realised his mistake but was too late to rectify it. All credit to Day for trying to explain this in his article.

But someone brought the Impulsoria to Berlin in 1853, as described by Feldhaus. It presumably had been purchased from the auction in Manchester.

## The Mystery of the Yatton Pub Sign

Why in the whole of England should the Impulsoria be commemorated in a pub sign at the Bridge Inn in quiet rural Somerset? The reference in the *The Wordsworth Dictionary of Pub Names* is as follows:

> Bridge. Bridges feature in many pub names. Bridge itself is common, though the sign of this pub at Yatton, Som. (referring to the bridge over the Bristol-Exeter railway, built in 1841) is unique in showing an 'Impulsoria'. This was a contraption (invented in 1850) with outsize wheels and a chain drive which enabled two horses to supply the power instead of the usual locomotive.[135]

There is a photograph of the sign in Eric Delderfield's *Stories of Inns and their signs*[136], published

1974, a beautifully precise depiction of the Impulsoria. I deciphered the name Stanley Chew in the corner, which gave me another avenue to explore as he was one of the greatest pub sign painters of England. Chew's paintings were outstanding and some have been captured in a book by John Martin.[137] John Martin suggested I contacted his family (Stanley died in 1997) but warned me I might not find anything conclusive: 'I visited Stanley Chew on many occasions to discuss his work. He did not have much information on the origin of the names. However, he did know why he chose the design etc.'[138]

Fig.10 Impulsoria, Yatton Pub Sign, 1980-1984

I corresponded with his son at the family home in Buckfastleigh. He checked the archive in his father's studio but found nothing. It seems likely that Stanley Chew was intrigued by the *Illustrated London News* picture and used it for the sign for a pub whose back garden had once been crossed by a railway. My guess is that Stanley Chew had come across the Impulsoria in Day's article in the October 1960 issue of *Railway World*.

After my search was highlighted in the *Clevedon Mercury* 23 Feb 2010 as well as being mentioned on the Strawberry Line Community Cafe website, another later photograph of the sign turned up, from Mr. Phil Giorgetti, who had been landlord from 1980 to 1984. Chew's work had been overpainted.

Finally a third photograph turned up in the Inn Sign Society's Archives. My correspondent, David Roe, thought that this was taken in April 1980. It was sadly dilapidated.[139] The sign has now vanished and there is apparently no link with Yatton beyond Stanley Chew being inspired by a picture of the Impulsoria.

## Final Flickers of the Impulsoria

In the decades that follow there are rare but recurring mentions of the Impulsoria: the *Illustrated London News* picture is usually reproduced, though occasionally the red crayon version by Maronier surfaces. Oddly, *The Lancet* recalled the Impulsoria, in an article in the 1910 issue entitled *The Medical Profession and the Early History of the Motor-car*. The writer refers to *A concise history of English carriages* by a coachmaker, George Smith, published in 1896 for an account of the Impulsoria:

> In Mr. Smith's book is a picture of 'The Patent Impulsoria' (reprinted from the Illustrated London News, June 22nd, 1850), a weird-looking contrivance consisting of a set of road wheels rotated by means of horses perched over the wheels and walking up a moveable inclined plane (an 'endless' slope) after the fashion of a treadmill (this was no doubt the 'Patent Impulsoria' shown by A. Crestadoro of Manchester at the Great Exhibition, London, in 1851.[140]

Another account comes from the *Railway Magazine*, August 1975. The author, L. Williams, had come across the *Illustrated London News* article and saw the merit of the invention in a world that will eventually run out of oil and coal. L. Williams gave the *Illustrated London News* piece in full, commenting that the engraving is so clear that an engineer could make a working model from it. Ironically he saw the merit of the Impulsoria in the twentieth century: 'How many stations that have been closed in recent years could have kept a useful service? How many men would love to have charge of those lovely shire horses, and wouldn't we get back some of the magic of "watching the trains" go by?'[141]

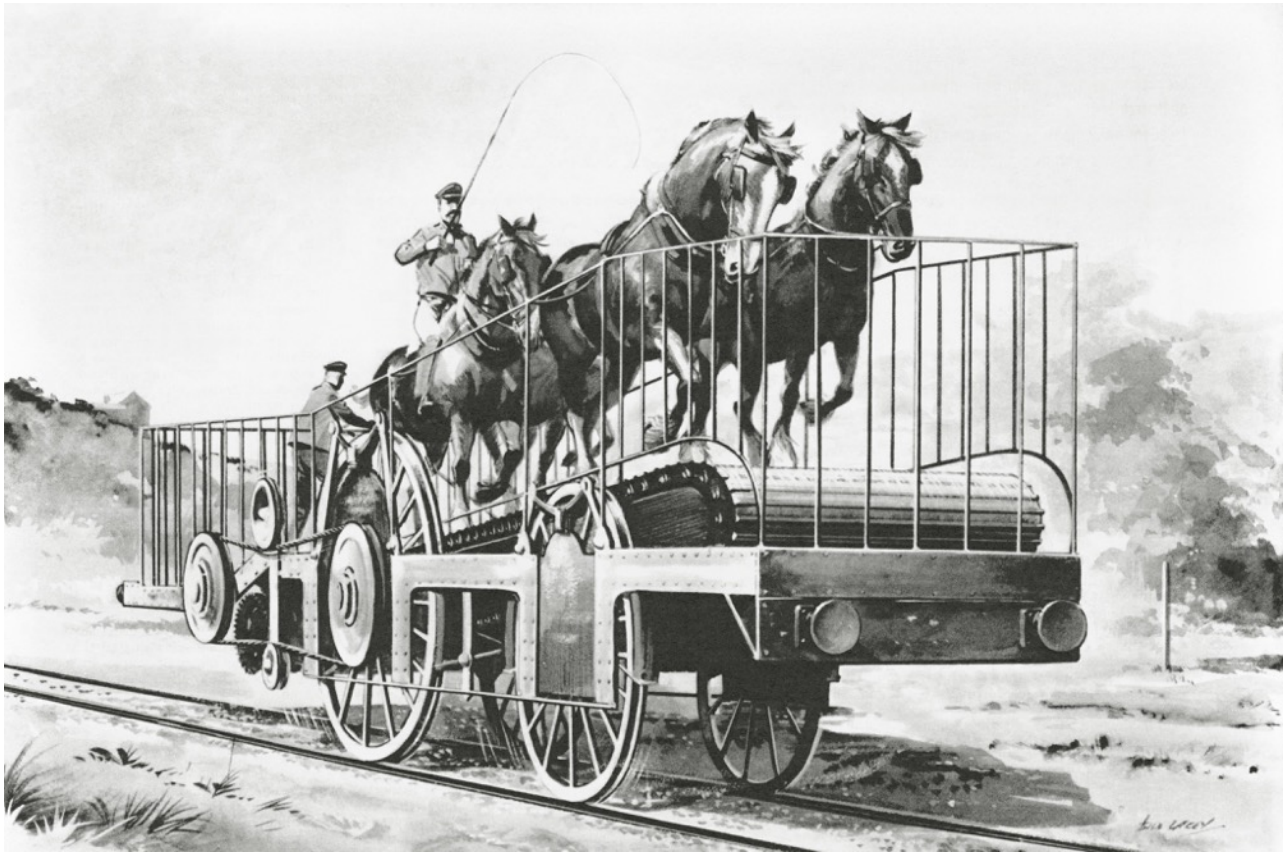

Fig.11 Impulsoria, *Look and Learn*

The Impulsoria surfaces most dramatically in the 1946 issue of a children's magazine, *Look and Learn*,[142] with an illustration that fairly charges out of the page, with the usual image imaginatively reversed so the horses are coming at you.

The appeal of this startling machine is tremendous: an image that combines the torrential force of a Ben Hur style chariot race with a behemoth of rail.

Confusion over the illustration continues. In the popular book, *The Iron Road,*[143] published in 2014, the *Illustrated London News* picture of the Impulsoria has been wrongly used to illustrate the Cyclopede, and this will generate more mistakes in future. A humiliation indeed for the magnificent Impulsoria.

A Swedish blog devoted to classic cars, recently covered the Cyclopede and the Impulsoria,[144] naming both Masserano and Crestadoro as the inventors of the Impulsoria. What is new in this piece is the proposition that the design might be the embryo of the Dutch car manufacturer DAF's Variomatic automatic transmission.

So the Impulsoria leaves a colourful trail through history, muddling along with other obscure sibling inventions, and casting some glory and glamour on Crestadoro.

## Crestadoro and Animals

Crestadoro's humanity and kindness are evident in his writings, in his principles and in the recollections of his friends. Mentions of animals in his works tend to be sensitive, for example the description of dog behaviour in *Du Pouvoir Temporel.* The design of the Impulsoria specifically gave shelter to the horses: the open carriage of the *Illustrated London News* was inaccurate.

On 16 July 1934, the new Central Library opened in Manchester, stimulating a wave of interest in the origins of the library and of the first librarians, including Crestadoro. An article in the 16 July issue of the *Manchester Guardian* focused on the Impulsoria, pondering its cruelty to the horses. There was speedy rebuttal of this in the next day's issue, a letter asserting that the welfare of the horse was a main impetus for the invention. The source quoted is from someone who knew Crestadoro well, a former member of his staff, W. R. Credland. His view of the humane intention of the Impulsoria presumably comes directly from discussions with Crestadoro. This is his letter:

> In an article on 'The Library Movement in Manchester' in your issue of the 16th mention is made of Dr. Crestadoro, of Genoa, the third chief librarian of the Reference Library and a many-sided man. The writer recalls his achievements, and says that the doctor 'planned to propel a horse carriage by causing the horse to work on artificial ground from which the motive power could be transferred, thus turning as one critic said, the 'horse into a turnspit'. The late W.R. Credland, deputy chief librarian, in his volume 'Free Public Libraries', takes a different view of the device. The 'impulsoria' for draught horses pulling heavy loads was a humane device calculated to relieve the animals from overstrain. An Italian engineer whom I met two years ago told me (writes a correspondent) that he had seen a specimen of Dr. Crestadoro's contrivance in one of the museums at Genoa and considered it very ingenious.[145]

I could not trace this model in Genoa.

## A New Sibling

Mention has been made of Cycloped, the predecessor of the Impulsoria. There were other models in the family, all designed to transfer power from horses working on a platform or treadmill to the wheels of a vehicle, whether car, locomotive, tow-boat or farm machinery. None was very successful.

But the curious design keeps resurfacing. The *Guardian* of 17 August 2009 featured the Naturmobil, a machine designed for road rather than rail, but which is essentially the same model of a horse on the treadmill with transference of power to the wheels. The Guardian ridiculed the invention: 'Mirhejazi has offered to give away the prototype, patent, and $100,000 to anyone who can explain why the Naturmobil was really invented. Advertising? Eco-friendly horsebox? It seems the inventor himself is not entirely sure.'[146]

The inventor, Hadi Mirhejazi, is an Iranian engineer, which seems appropriate. Crestadoro always thought the cradle of the Impulsoria's ancestors was the ancient east. Axon, in the *Manchester Guardian* obituary, commented on Dr. Crestadoro's candid admission that his Impulsoria specification was as old as the ancient Egyptians (an echo here of Crestadoro's insistence in the taxation reform pamphlet that he merely puts together and improves upon the ideas of other men).

Crestadoro himself had emphasised the point in his Impulsoria improvement patent:

> As to the propelling animal engine or impulsoria, I do not claim the application of animal power to locomotive or other mechanical purposes; this on water being as ancient at least as it appears from ancient paintings on Egyptian tombs, which represent paddle boats propelled by oxen, and from the Roman soldiers having been conveyed to Sicily in wheeled boats driven by cattle; and, on land, experiments having been made to introduce the horse into the carriage for locomotive purpose very early in the present century at least.[147]

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[90] L. Williams, 'The Patent Impulsoria', *Railway Magazine* 121:892 (August 1975), pp.386-7

[91] 'The Patent Impulsoria', *Illustrated London News* 16:432 (June 22 1850), pp.433-4

[92] Cyclopede, rainhilltrails.com

[93] Magdalen Goffin (ed.), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin A Manchester Man 1787-1861* (Stroud: Sutton, 1993) p.110

[94] Christopher Woolmar, *Fire and Steam*, (London: Atlantic, 2007) Introduction

[95] Woolmar, *Fire and Steam*, p.41

[96] Albert Schram, *Railways and the Formation of the Italian State in the 19th century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997) p.103

[97] www.provinoci.asti.it/treniasti/archivio/testi/trabalza/2p3.html

[98] Samuel Smiles, The Life of George Stephenson and his son Robert (London: Murray, 1868, new edition) p.vii

[99] www.lincei-celebrazioni.it

[100] 'Clemente Masserano inventre dimentica' 23 November 2011 www.ecodelchisne.it

[101] Vittorio Marchis, *150 (anni di) invenzioni italiane* (edizioni Codice) and e-mail to author, 1 February 2012

[102] L'Arche D'Alliance, *Bulletin de là Société de L'Océanie*, 1 (1849) p.63

[103] William Marshall, e-mails to author, July-August 2009

[104] Dr. Hanna Klarenbeck, e-mail to author, 21 March 2012

[105] Randolph Hollingsworth, 'She Used Her Power Lightly: A Political History of Margaret Wickcliffe Preston of Kentucky', (PhD dissertation, University of Kentucky) p. 177

[106] Frances Keller Swinford, *The Flying Dutchman - Rudolf John Julius deRoode A paper delivered at the Monday Club, Lexington, Kentucky, Sept 15, 1978* by Frances Keller Swinford (great granddaughter of Professor deRoode) (Unpublished)

[107] University of Kentucky Audio-Visual Archives, 63M349 Wickliffe-Preston Papers, Wickcliffe, Robert Jr,- correspondence from Sardinia 1844-1850

[108] Barry Curl, *The L&SWR at Nine Elms*, (Southampton: KRB) p.11

[109] Joseph Cross, *Cross's New Plan of London* (London: 3rd ed. 1847)

[110] Cuthbert Hamilton Ellis, *The South Western Railway* (London: Allen, 1956) p. 54

[111] 'The Patent Impulsoria', *Illustrated London News* 16:432 (June 22 1850), pp. 433-4

[112] John Timbs, *Year Book of Facts in Science and Art* (London: Bogue, 1850) p. 62

[113] *Scientific American,* 5: 43 (13 July, 1850) p. 340

[114] *Scientific American*, 7: 52 (18 October 1851) p. 38

[115] *Scientific American*, 7: 52 (18 October 1851) p. 38

[116] *Urbis* (Supplemto 1 March 2011)

[117] 'Horses in Place of Steam for Railways', *The Wisconsin Farmer and Northwestern Cultivator* (1850) p.197

[118] J K Major, 'The Horse-Engine in the 19th Century', *Transactions of the Newcomen Society* 6:1(1988), 31- 48

[119] J.B. 'Three Old Victorian Magazines', *The Melbourne Review* 23 (July 1, 1881)p. 292

[120] J.B. 'Three Old Victorian Magazines', p.292

[121] 'Nuovo system di locomozione a menattrice', *Progresso Scientifico* (1851)

[122] John Kelly, undated letter to author

[123] MA Letter M6/3 11/93

[124] Howard Spring, *The Houses In Between*, (London: Collins, 1959)

[125] Michael Leapman, *The World for a Shilling: How the Great Exhibition of 1851 Shaped a Nation* (London: Review, 2002)

[126] Michael Leapman, *The World for a Shilling*, p. 148

[127] Christopher Hobhouse, *1851 and the Crystal Palace* (London: Murray,1937) p. 72-73

[128] Hobhouse, *1851 and the Crystal Palace* p. 72-73

[129] John Hayward, 'The Great Exhibition', *The Observer* (4 April 1937)

[130] Jorge Casimiro, 'Exposicoes Universais: Londres 1851', in *ALQUIMIAS 7 Programa Internet na escloa Acontecimentos – 1, Junho 2000*

[131] Leapman, *The World for a Shilling*, p. 276

[132] John Hewish, *Rooms near Chancery Lane: The Patent Office under the Commissioners, 1852- 1883* (London, BL, 2000)

[133] 'Sales by Auction', *Manchester Guardian,* 15 September 15 1852

[134] J. R. Day, 'Impulsoria at Nine Elms', *Railway World* (October 1960), p.309 and 317

[135] Leslie Dunkling and Gordon Wright, *The Dictionary of Pub Names* (Ware: Wordsworth, 1994)

[136] Eric R. Delderfield, *Inns and their Signs: Fact and Fiction* (Newton Abbot, David & Charles, 1975)

[137] John Martin, *Stanley Chew's Pub Signs*, (The S.P.A and John Martin, 1993)

[138] John Martin, e-mail to author, 27 April 2010

[139] David Roe, e-mail to author, 15 October 2010

[140] 'The Medical Profession and the Early History of the Motor-car', *The Lancet* 175:4505 (1 Jan 1910)

[141] L. Williams, 'The Patent Impulsoria', *Railway Magazine* 121:892 (August 1975), pp. 386-7

[142] 'Masserano's Patent Impulsoria!', *Look and Learn* 474 (13 February 1971)

[143] Woolmar, *The Iron Road: the Illustrated History of the Railway* (London: DK, 2014) p.28

[144] 'Lokomotiven Cyclopede och Impulsoria', perrasmotornostalgi.blogspot.co.uk

[145] 'Miscellany', *Manchester Guardian*, July 17 1934

[146] Harry Byford, 'The Naturomobil is the ultimate green car', *Guardian* (17 August 2009)

[147] Andrew Crestadoro, *Complete Specification No. 300: Applying Animal Power to Railways, Waterways, and Common Roads; also. Improvements in Railway and other Carriages, Buffers, Springs, Breaks, and Chains, and in Propelling Vessels (*London: Printed by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1853)

# Chapter Six: A Norrible Tail

To The Editor of the Astronomical Register

Sir.-I must say that the perusal of the letter of Mr. E. Lawrence, in the April number of the Astronomical Register, involuntarily induced in my mind the recollection of that fine dictum of the American philosopher, 'There's nothing new, and there's nothing true, and it don't much signify.' Twelve years ago, a Professor A. Crestadora [sic] propounded the same wild theory in an Astronomical Annual (published by Weale, and so called, I suppose, on the lucus a non lucendo principle, because it only appeared in the one year, 1854). Were comets really lenses they would be invisible when turned edgeways to the earth, and only seen as bright nuclei surrounded by a halo when exactly between the earth and sun; or, so to speak, in inferior conjunction. As for what your correspondent says about the tail, he must bear in mind that it is by no means 'always in the direction of a ray from the sun,' although it is generally turned away from it; and, moreover, if he is old enough to recollect that superb object, Donati's Comet of 1858, he must admit, from the marked curvature of its tail, that the 'lens' of the comet must have refracted the light in a curvilinear direction: a perversion of physical law only paralleled by the Irishman's gun, which shot round a corner. Finally, several comets are recorded with more than one tail, and their appendages have been visible at most varying angles with each other; which involves, as it seems to me, another and an insuperable objection to Signor Crestadoro's theory as revived by Mr. Lawrence,

I am, Sir, yours, &c,

A NORRIBLE TAIL,

April 9th 1866[148]

## Crestadoro's scientific paper

In his early days in England Crestadoro embarked on a strange interlude where he attempted to impress the scientific community through publishing a paper. There was always something of the schoolboy in Crestadoro, hitting upon 'wizard wheezes' that sometimes are embarrassing in their simplicity. His enthusiasm and lack of rigorous examination may also reflect his rather haphazard education and the narrow confines of priesthood. Crestadoro's absorption in multitudes of books, from ancient to modern, his lack of critical discipline, produce a certain amount of muddle, as well as imaginative leaps. When it came to information structures, however, he was remarkably rigorous in his theories and practice.

In 1853, Crestadoro propounded a stunning theory in his paper *Expected Return of the Great Comet of 1556; or the Cometic Mysteries Dissipated*[149] but it was met with silence, apart from two irate readers, across a decade, who tore the whole thing savagely apart. (I refer to the work as *Cometic Mysteries* as that seems more revealing of both style and content.)

## The Great Comets of the Nineteenth Century

Crestadoro's thoughts were focused on the issues of the day, and he was determined to somehow make his mark. Comets were a hot topic; they caught the imagination of the nineteenth century, from artists and writers through to astronomers and amateur observers. Cometary orbits had been identified, instrumentation greatly advanced and the huge number of observers rewarded by a profusion of comets: 'No fewer than eight Great Comets graced nineteenth-century skies, six of these appearing within the space of just 40 years, bestowing upon many an astronomer an enviable set of indelible memories.'[150]

Altogether, over 200 comets were detected in this one century. The twentieth century was barren by comparison. Comets illuminated Crestadoro's life, though of course not all were visible to the human eye or from the locations he was in.

The Great Comet appeared the year before his birth, discovered in Sicily by Giovanni, and the Great Southern Comet the year after his death. As a little boy in Genoa, Crestadoro may have seen his first comet, the Great Comet of 1811. He certainly could have seen even without a telescope the 1819 Great Comet Tralles, the Pons comets of 1825, the Great Comet of 1831, Halley's Comet in 1835, the swiftly-blazing Great March Comet of 1843, the Hind Comet of 1846, Klinkerfues in 1853, the Great Comet of 1854, the spectacular Donati's Comet in 1857, the 1860 Great Comet, 1861 Tebbutt's comet, and Coggia's comet in 1874.[151] He may have witnessed the magnificent meteorite shower of 27 November 27 1872 which is thought to have fragmented from the death of the split comet, Biela.

The excitement of scientists and the general public over comets has not changed through the centuries. The media today are as extravagant as the Victorian press on the wonders of comets. Given the ferment over these mysterious visitors, it is not surprising that Crestadoro had his own line to announce.

## Networking and the ferment of ideas

By the time Crestadoro came to England the modern world that the Lunar men of the eighteenth century had stimulated into being was all around him in the great cities, their factories, warehouses and trade, in the steam engines, the ships, the trains, the canal boats and the hot air balloons. Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, London, Bristol poured out their products and brought in more

from across the world, an unstoppable tide of consumerism. New dyes, medicines, fuels, metals and materials boiled out of the industrial scale laboratories. Fossils, geology, terrible lizards, evolution, social and political reform, demands for public museums, libraries, art galleries, parks and national education were all racing through in a torrent of exhilarating change, depending how you saw it.

There was a plethora of scientific, literary and philosophical societies, of published papers, journals, newspapers and a raft of emerging institutions, of Mechanics' Institutes, Free Libraries, Sunday Schools (whose libraries were surprisingly adult and technical in scope, serving young working men and women as well as children), evening classes, public lectures: all giving new opportunities to those bent on advancement. This was Crestadoro's milieu. Initially he was limited by his uncertain grasp of spoken English that was so different from how it appeared in grammars as he himself admitted:

> On his first visit to England he was made painfully aware of the vast difference between the spoken and written language, and he found that owing to the anomalies of our spelling his book knowledge of 'the well of English undefiled' was of very little service, and for a time his part in conversation had to be carried on by writing.[152]

Writing in English was no problem and he must have been keen to establish his presence in print.

## The Astronomical Annual

Crestadoro's effort to win notice for his scientific theories was badly misjudged. He never again raised his head above this particular parapet, confining himself thereafter to technical invention. He published his paper in *An Astronomical Annual for 1854*, a journal not emanating from a society but produced by John Weale of 59, High Holborn, London. The distinction between publisher, printer and author, then as now, was often blurred and it is possible that Crestadoro paid for the piece to appear. Would be inventors or amateur scientists, like would be poets, were a source of income for publishers. There was more credit in being invited to present a paper to a society and it then being published. Happily this finally happened to Crestadoro in the last stage of his life with *Taxation Reform* being 'printed by request of Professor Bonamy Price'. Or so Crestadoro averred in his *Momus* interview.

John Weale published a variety of scientific works but never a second *An Astronomical Annual*. This suggests that the work might have been commissioned by the authors and was not worth a second attempt. The annual contains three parts. Part I is entitled *The Ephemerides,* Part II is Crestadoro's *Expected Return of the Great Comet; or, the Cometic Mysteries Dissipated*. Part III seems to be a runner for a book published by John Weale in his *Rudimentary Series*. This section, *Notice of the Biography of J. S. Bailly* is a short life of Bailly, the famous French astronomer who was guillotined in 1793, followed a year later by the brilliant chemist Antoine Lavoisier. The apocryphal story is that Lavoisier's appeal for clemency in order to finish his work was turned down by the judge with the chilling declaration: 'The Republic has no need for savants (scientists).'

## John Weale

John Weale sounds exactly like the sort of person Crestadoro would have mixed with in London. They shared similar interests in engineering, science and education and moved in the same London circles of publishers, booksellers, printers and scholars. Business interests did not always dictate the books a publishing firm produced. John Weale did not make a great profit in his forty years as a publisher, but played a significant part in the spread of accessible knowledge. As well as the main architectural and engineering books, he produced his *Rudimentary Series*: scientific and technical

texts written by eminent men and women, and published at one shilling. Over one hundred and thirty books were produced. As *DNB* comments: 'these works together constituting an important innovation in cheap educational literature.'[153]

Somewhere between October 1853 and August 1854, Crestadoro moved from his Vauxhall haunts near Nine Elms Station to various lodgings in the proximity of the PO in High Holborn and the BM in Bloomsbury. John Weale's business was just down the road. What John Weale made of the ridicule that the Professor from the University of Turin brought upon *An Astronomical Annual* is anyone's guess.

### *Cometic Mysteries*

The full title of Crestadoro's paper is *Expected Return of the Great Comet of 1556 ; or, the Cometic Mysteries Dissipated, with illustrations, by Professor A. Crestadoro, of the University of Turin ; Author of the 'Saggio d'instituzioni sulla facolta della parola,' and 'Delle Casse di Risparmio', etc*.

Crestadoro was clearly marketing himself as a professor, but what are the 'etc.' works? Presumably he was referring to his two patents of 1852, No.300 on animal power and No.735 on communication.

The article itself is extensive. There is a preface and three sections, running for seventy-six pages, a fourth section of eight pages on *The Legitimate Cause of the Aurora Borealis and Zodiacal Light* and finally an update, *September, 1853*.

Theories of comets had been propounded across the ages from Aristotle through to Newton, Halley and beyond. Seneca was refreshingly sensible in seeing that as comets rarely appeared it would take 'long successive ages' to determine the laws of these celestial wanderers. Seneca's view of the divine nature of comets reinforced popular beliefs in their prophetic (usually taken as baleful) significance. Ironically, Seneca, who tried to persuade Nero that the A.D. 60 comet was auspicious, died in the Emperor's A.D. 64 'comet purge'. Nero sacrificed distinguished men to avoid his own doom, comets being supposed to foretell the death of great rulers.

None of this deterred Crestadoro from presenting his amazing notion which he clearly thinks is pretty good; though, as ever, he puts his claim forward with all due modesty in the Preface:

> About two years since the writer of these pages happened to observe some interesting phenomena in the propagation of light, which appeared to indicate the most simple solution of several very important physical and astronomical problems, amongst which were the Comets, the Aurora Borealis, and Zodiacal Light. Since then, having applied himself to submit the suggestions of nature to the test of a scientific analysis, a demonstrative evidence in their support so forcibly has commanded his conviction, that he feels himself justified, at a time when the return of the Great Comet of 1556 is still expected, in venturing to invite the cultivators of science to survey impartially the new scene with which they will be presented on this sublime and puzzling enigma of astronomy. He wishes not to be condemned as desirous of being 'wise above what is written,' and he solicits inquiry with as much earnestness and anxiety as the most incredulous sceptic can possibly desire.

Crestadoro's paper was learned and up to date. He cited the historic view of comets as dire portents, quoted from major scientists and philosophers from across the centuries, as well as picking up on contemporary observers. He included current observatory reports from several countries, mathematical calculations from China and gave information on the appearances and theories

associated with the great comets. He was respectful of the ideas and advances, whether they came from elite or popular sources. In commenting on the odd piece of information that the ignorant thought one of the three comets seen in 1618 to be converted from the planet Venus, he pays this tribute: 'It is an ancient observation that ignorant people's good sense very often anticipates instinctively the highest genius in meeting the truth; and astronomy owes to the early observations of humble shepherds the critical accuracy which it may boast at present.'

It is a shame that Crestadoro did not merely produce a review of cometic studies; it would have made a good text for John Weale's *Rudimentary Series*. Surveys of emerging fields by experts were greatly appreciated by enquirers who did not have direct sources readily available. It all helped with vital networking and with getting new ideas promulgated. Joseph Priestley, by writing a history of electricity, met experimenters such as Benjamin Franklin and received sympathetic support. Agnes Clerke, the astronomer who popularised her subject with a historical study published in 1885, was, unusually for a woman, elected as an honorary member of the Royal Astronomical Society, and NASA even named a lunar crater after her in 1981.[154] But Crestadoro, like Icarus, was aiming higher.

## Crestadoro's theory

With stunning panache, Crestadoro proposed a simple solution to the mysteries of comets: they do not really exist but are a trick of light and shadows.

At least, this seems to be the substance of his theory; interposed between his scholarly expositions, it is rather difficult to grasp. He seems to have arrived at a simplistic principle of comets being merely phases of planets, based on observations of a lighted bull's eye lantern, and using the rather confusing model of the candle being the sun and the body of the lantern the planet:

> a result will take place corresponding to what occurs when a person, placed behind the dark side of the lantern, sees the light reflected by its opposite or illuminated side, sweeping around through space in long trains; the slightest shifting of the lantern causing the streams of light to perform the most eccentric motions with incredible velocity.

It is almost unbelievable that a person so aware of the complex investigations of comets from the ancients right down to 1852, could seriously propose a smoke and mirrors magic trick of an explanation. Additionally, he was revising the discarded notion of comets as planets and writing of what was no longer relevant to the scientific community: the concept of divine design. Immediately after quoting from Pierre-Simon La Place, the astronomer who very definitely had no time for God in science, he concluded the whole paper with the following:

> Let the records of cometic observations and of polar and zodiacal lights be carefully connected with those of the planetary conditions, and it will be soon fairly ascertained whether the odd phenomena which used to affright our ancestors, and still remained the most sublime and unrevealed mysteries of nature, are but natural corollaries of the beautiful and providential laws which the Creator's hand, working the wonders of his power, has imposed upon planetary systems.

## Aurora Borealis and Zodiacal Light

Nor does Crestadoro stop at comets: he also confidently offers solutions to the other mysteries of the Aurora Borealis and the Zodiacal light. He reviews the hypotheses, including the interesting cluster of ideas around magnetism and electricity. But again he looks for the simple, unifying

solution, supporting it with diagrams, mathematics and explanations that make for confusion rather than clarity, and all revolves around the notion of conical shapes, shadows and planets:

> Like the moon, the planets Mercury and Venus, at each respective revolution, will cut with their shadow the earth's axis in a plane corresponding to their passage, and will launch their streams into the earth's shadow accordingly, producing an auroral invasion the more powerful and bright the larger the planet is and the nearer to the fountain of light, in comparison with our satellite. Perhaps to this class belong such of the recorded phenomena which excited alike the wonder and admiration of the spectator on account of their unusual degree of splendour and magnificence.

The Norwegian explorer and scientist, Kirsten Birkeland (1878-1917) spent years of hardship, misery and injustice in his pursuit of the secrets of the Aurora Borealis. Physically frail, partially deaf from radio-wave experiments, he endured the extremes of the frozen north and the deserts of Egypt to prove his theories. He created the terrella machine to simulate zodiacal light. British scientists disparaged his conclusions. Fifty years after his strange death in Japan, he was spectacularly vindicated. NASA navigation satellites produced the evidence of magnetic disturbances over the Polar Regions and Birkeland's once disparaged theories were totally re-assessed. He is now recognised as the first scientist to have correctly explained the Aurora Borealis. The whole epic is related in Lucy Jago's book, *The Northern Lights - How one man sacrificed love, happiness and sanity to unlock the secrets of space.*[155]

Crestadoro, drawing his inspiration from a bull's eye lantern, was a dabbler and certainly became lost in his pride at having found a connecting principle to all these mysteries and one, furthermore, based on the ancients.

## Revealing Images of Cometic Mysteries

Crestadoro must have enjoyed writing this paper; it is the most playful, colourful and freely imagined of all his works. It is stuffed as richly as a Christmas pudding with observations, quotations, conjectures, and imagery. The text fairly dances through a wheeling, sparkling universe of darkness, shadow and shafts of colossal light. It is the poetry of lines, latitudes, Polar Regions, discs of colossal planets, candles, fire, crescents, transits and eclipses. In many ways, it is typical of language Victorian astronomers employed to describe the mysteries of their observations. There is a welcome freedom of expression in this paper. Here perhaps is the rejoicing of a man who is now on his own, free of the restrictions of priesthood and free of the tensions of fractured Italy, the realm of conspiracy, foreign rule, oppression and police.

Returning to the theory that Crestadoro was involved in Risorgimento conspiracies, it is interesting how several images reflect the secrecy and terror of a revolutionary era, riddled with spies and restrictions on movement. The whole atmosphere of the paper is of dark, moving shadows, eclipses and piercing rays of light, the bull's eye lantern seems to swing from a searcher's hand, either of policeman or conspirator, and sudden illumination sweeps the night like searchlights. Crestadoro refers to the 'watchful duty of the astronomical sentry', and describes the movement of a planet as it eclipses the sun as follows: 'The celestial traveller is visiting our neighbourhoods, but he is not expected to violate the incognito periodically attached to him; so no suspicion is thrown upon his person when playing an occasional trick to his old astronomical friend behind the shelter of a cometic disguise.'

Further on, he picks this up again: 'At length the astronomer is going to give him his long

vacations, on his visiting the home of his parent. No password with regard to him is to be given to the astronomical sentry for a long period to come. He has got his furlough.'

Having escaped from a country where travel between towns and states was tightly controlled by the issue of passports and travel warrants, it is not surprising that Crestadoro turned to such images. The paper also reveals his susceptibility to beauty, both of the vast universe that fascinates him and also of the beauty of women, if the following passage is anything to go by: 'Beautiful Venus, instead of overpowering with light the terrestrial observer, is turning in an opposite direction her dazzling splendour upon her own attendant, like a proud mother, who, called to produce her jewels, points to the refulgent gifts of her daughter.'

Crestadoro's paper is remarkable for its learning, the extensive reading it reveals, and it seems a pity he did not confine himself to a study of cosmology and so avoid ridicule. But Crestadoro was never purely a scholar: he creatively applied his own theories and experiments to whatever body of research he was studying. This worked for information science but not for comets. In this case he was wholly wrong.

## Good timing for Publication

Weale's *An Astronomical Annual*, although supposedly covering 1854, came out on 15 September 1853, with advertisements being placed for it on 5 and 6 September in the *Morning Post*. In the confusing way of many annuals it predated the year included in the title. The price was one shilling and copies could be obtained from John Weale at 59 High Holborn: 'Booksellers and Newsmen may have, upon application, octavo postcards.'

*Cometic Mysteries* includes an update. It was a great scoop for Crestadoro that he could add the exciting news of a spectacular comet that had appeared in late August: 'September, 1853 The production which is now presented to the public was in the hands of the printer when the comet alluded to in page 72, as being then under telescopic observation, became conspicuous to the naked eye.' Crestadoro then elaborates on this 'novel cometic apparition' being linked to Venus.

It is of course possible that the wily Crestadoro removed his pages from the printer, revised his text to look as if he had predicted the comet and then added the update note.

I cannot really comprehend Crestadoro's theories but can admire his quickness in using the appearance of the comet and resulting newspaper correspondence to publicise his paper.

## Self Promotion

A letter from a S. C. Sharpe had been published in the *Morning Post* on 26 August 1853, an excited account of seeing a 'beautiful comet' travelling rapidly across the evening sky: 'The nebulous body was fully as large as a planet, and the tail, was very long and luminous.' Not being aware of any expected comets he asks if any of 'your astronomical readers will be able to explain the eccentric appearance.'

Next day the *Morning Post* published a letter from an 'A.W.' of London. This correspondent was keen to inform S. C. Sharpe:

> that the phenomenon alluded to was expected by an astronomical friend of mine, by whom I and others were informed that the appearance would take place in August. An interesting manuscript on the subject had been prepared by him, and was to have been printed last month, but the publishing arrangements could not be completed. I understand it is now being printed by Weale, of Holborn. I enclose my address, and shall be glad to give further

particulars if desired.

This seems slightly odd. The disingenuous mention of the paper in a way designed to whet the appetite, the supposed publishing delay and the reference to Weale all suggest a put up job.

I suspect that Crestadoro wrote this letter, that he is his own 'astronomical friend' and that A.W. is simply taken from 'A ndre W' Crestadoro (he often used Andrew instead of Andrea).

'A.W.' pushed *Cometic Mysteries* again, neatly timed for five days after its publication.

This second letter, published in the *Morning Post* on 20 September 1853 appeared under the label 'Startling Discovery about the Comet'.

> It is no less than a new law of the planetary radiation and formation shadows, that dissipates all the mystery attached to comets, the rings of Saturn, Zodiacal Light, Aurora Borealis, and a few other unexplained phenomena, such as occur in the eclipses and transits of Jupiter's satellites…The paper is entitled, 'Expected Return of the Great Comet of 1556, or the Cometic Mysteries Dissipated; with Illustrations.'

Surely only Crestadoro could have written this abstract. Like many authors past and present, it looks as if Crestadoro yielded to the temptation of pushing his own book under a cover name.

He certainly favoured the *Morning Post*, for in the 17 October 1853 issue there is a letter from Crestadoro, under his name and addressed from 4 Clayland's Road, Kennington. Somewhat brazenly, if my suspicions are correct, he refers to 'A.W.':

> As your correspondent A.W., in your paper of the 20th ult., has noticed my publication in the 'An Astronomical Annual,' on the discovery that comets are only the phases of ordinary planets on their way to or from conjunction, under certain circumstances, and that the last comet which was conspicuous to the naked eye turns out to be the planet | Venus, perhaps you will allow me to add that the subsequent comet, as observed in the latter end of September, is the planet Mercury. It became visible when in Leo—a constellation then travelled by this planet, as a morning star, in its way to superior conjunction. Its nucleus is described to have been from four to five seconds in diameter, the apparent breadth of Mercury when approaching the opposite part of the orbit. In fact this body was a morning comet, while the vespertine Venus gave us an evening exhibition.—I am, sir, your obedient servant, A. CRESTADORO. 4, Clayland's-road, Kennington, 15th October, 1853.

The letter was labelled as 'The Second Comet'. In fact, Crestadoro was spectacularly wrong, for there was only one comet.

## Response to The Cometic Mysteries Dissipated – 'I am, Sir, yours, &c. J.F. Sheerness, Nov. 28, 1853'

Apart from the dubious 'A.W' episode, the immediate reaction to Crestadoro's paper came from a resident of Sheerness, a certain J. F. whose three-page letter was published in the *Mechanics' Magazine* in November 1853.[156] The *Mechanics Magazine* did not suffer fools gladly. The readers were mainly wresting a technical education from a hard working life, with no time to waste on nebulous fancies. Lecturers who dithered around and did not deliver the hard information or stimulating ideas that their audience demanded were reviewed pitilessly in the journal.

J.F. was outraged by Crestadoro's pretensions and ripped his paper to pieces. Had he (I presume J.F. is a man) been a schoolteacher it is easy to imagine him shrieking 'Stupid boy!' and crossing out

the diagrams and mathematical formulae with a heavy red pen. He concluded contemptuously: 'But such is the solution of Professor Crestadoro, which is submitted to the consideration of the cultivators of science; and I venture to affirm, that it is not more surprising to find the author's name decorated with university honours, than to find a publisher of such trash in the person of Mr. Weale.'

It is difficult to defend Crestadoro against the full weight of J.F.'s coherent attack. He logically exposed the fallacies whilst clearly struggling to remain polite in the face of the Crestadoro's idiocy of even thinking there could be such a simple solution to the mysteries of astronomy. He pitilessly revealed the basic misunderstanding of the bull's eye lantern analogy:

> I think it will be evident to the most superfluous observer that there can be but little analogy between the rays of light from a bull's-eye lantern and those projected into space by planets, since the conditions necessary in the one case are wanting in the other. In the first place, the rays of light from the bull's-eye are refracted (not reflected); so also are those from the prismatic lens, while those from non-luminous bodies, such as planets, are reflected.

The demolition work continued. Crestadoro's idea that the standard diagram for representing eclipses should be reversed, was knocked down in one biting paragraph:

> If this were true, we might some day expect to see Jupiter and Saturn, with all their rings and satellites, eclipsed by our globe, little as the inhabitants of those distant worlds may think of it; or we may suffer a similar indignity from Venus or Mercury. Has this ever occurred to Professor Crestadoro as a consequence of this theory?

Crestadoro's mathematics, models and muddles over light sources were blown away by the storming J.F., but his main irritation was reserved for the unquestioning reverence Crestadoro placed on 'philosophical evidence'. J.F. stoutly declared himself to be: 'rather in favour of what is here termed the anti-philosophical view of this matter.'

Was Crestadoro upset at the contemptuous dismissal of his simple solutions by the hard-nosed empirical *Mechanics' Magazine* reader? The sneer at his professorial status must have rankled.

## Fighting His Corner

The Great Comet of 1556 continued to be 'distinguished by its absence' as Crestadoro nicely put it. In fact it never reappeared, apart from being a cause of acrimonious controversy amongst several astronomers in 1856 and 1857 when it was for a time confused with the Great Comet of 1264, which also never reappeared. Comets are difficult to follow!

However, Crestadoro managed to use the occasion of the expected appearance of another comet to defend both his theory and the right to put forward theories. You have to admire Crestadoro as he staggers up for another round with a letter to *The Morning Post*, 10 April 1857:

> In August, 1853, you did me the honour of noticing a paper of mine on comets, published by Weale. It refers to a theory which, as a fair deduction from a new feature observed in the propagation of light, ascribes these mysterious exhibitions to phases of the inferior planets, Mercury, Venus, and other undiscovered bodies, if any, whose orbit is internal to that of the earth – when they pass between us and the sun under certain circumstances. Perhaps you will now kindly allow me a corner in your paper to state that this day month our nearest neighbour, Venus, will cross the line of her inferior conjunction.

The language is as exuberant and visionary as that of his original paper: there are celestial sheets, gold imprints, blazes across the firmament, privation and darkness:

> Around and from behind this blot of ink on the pure colour of the sky a mighty radiation goes on as before, and pours forth its blazes on the other side of the voiceless planet throughout the immensity of the heavens, in a variety of directions.

Venus is merely playing tricks and there is no comet. Again there is the language of concealment and control with astronomical sentries and cometic disguises behind curtains. Yet Crestadoro shows some caution, perhaps remembering J.F's contempt:

> as the exalted state of the astronomical science can suffer no diminution by the enunciation of a new theory on a subject that is still involved in mystery, perhaps even those of your readers who are disciples of Urania may take no offence at this attempt at a kind of prediction, in which even a failure cannot be regarded as dishonourable.

Crestadoro's theory was both new and sensational and his exhilarated outpourings had a touch of magic. Other newspapers such as the *Cheltenham Chronicle* and the *Sherborne Mercury* repeated the piece in full.

## Bring Out the Comet Wine

(Comets supposedly improve wine vintage, as well, as it transpires in 2015, spewing out alcohol themselves.) A Great Comet did appear a year later, but not related to the comet Crestadoro had forecast. It was first observed on the 2 June 1858 by Giovanni Donati of the Observatory of Florence, and so named after him. Donati's Comet was a spectacular sight with its huge sweep of a graceful tail across the heavens. It was seen all over the world and became an inspiration for art, music and literature, producing wild theories and poetry full of explanation marks. These excited and extravagant reactions make Crestadoro's feverish prose on comets more understandable.

Incidentally Donati's Comet was the first ever photographed: an obscure commercial photographer, William Usherwood, captured the image on 27 September from Walton Common, Surrey: 'with the aid of the camera he used for photographing babies and weddings', beating George Bond at Harvard College Observatory by a single day.[157]

Over a century later this comet still inspires poetry, as in the song 'Donati's Comet' by the wanderer, Trailer Star (likened himself to 'a star who burnt fitfully, then went out', but who in fact never existed apart from in the persona of the artist Shaun Belcher[158]). Another mystery dissipated:

> William Turner of Oxford is on his horse,
> riding between fields and old barn doors.
> Fields that should be blacker than a widow's dress,
> but tonight there's a comet burning in the west
> The frost is building on the thatched walls as
> William Turner picks up his pen and draws.
>
> The light that falls from Donati's Comet

## A decade later

Crestadoro's despised theory was resurrected and again disparaged in the 1866 pages of the *Astronomical Register*.

The correspondent named as 'A Norrible Tail', and quoted in full at the start of this chapter, was

reacting to a letter in the April 1866 number of the *Astronomical Register* by a Mr. E. Lawrence. 'A Norrible Tail' was reminded by Mr. E. Lawrence's ideas of a similar and equally ridiculous theory, propounded twelve years earlier by Crestadoro.

In response to this criticism from 'A Norrible Tail', Edwin Lawrence checked out Crestadoro's theory and then joined in disparaging it roundly in his letter of 4 May 1866:

> Sir,-'Lawrence's Theory of Comets,' Astron. Register, No. 40, April; Reply, by 'A Norrible Tail,' No. 41, May.
>
> -I have indeed a horrible tale to tell for the edification of your correspondent, who appears to be much more witty than wise. I will take his objections in order.
>
> 1. With respect to the first. I immediately purchased a copy of the unique Astronomical Annual of 1854, and was very agreeably disappointed to find that Sig. Crestadoro, so far from conceiving of a comet as a lens, propounded the extraordinary theory that comets were phases of the known planets (Jupiter, Mars, Venus, &)-that is to say, that a comet was a phantasmagoria produced by the sun reflected from the surface of an ordinary planet.

Edwin Lawrence waxed increasingly rude as he went through the list of points with such comments as 'your correspondent appears to have mistaken his grandmother's spectacles for SPHERICAL lenses.'

The riposte from 'A Norrible Tail' in the 8 June 1866 number to Lawrence's climb-down was relentless:

> Sir: Respectfully declining … to accept Mr. Lawrence's compliment to my wit at the expense of my wisdom, I must certainly express my regret that I confused Signor Crestadora's nonsense with Mr. Lawrence's' - well! Let us say - theory. I do not see much to choose between them. The Italian prefers his comet should reflect; even if he fails to do so himself. The Englishman obtains his interesting tail in one volume by refraction.

He recommended an experiment for Mr. Lawrence that in its imagery at least is reminiscent of Crestadoro's paper:

> Let him make a fire of damp wood and leaves at night in a field or garden, and then cast a beam of light from a policeman's bull's eye-lantern across the smoke. So far from such smoke being entirely illuminated (and let it twist and turn as it will) the divergent rays of light from the lantern will pursue their path through it in perfectly straight lines.

It is little wonder that the founder of *The Astronomical Register*, Sandford Gorton, found it necessary to cool down exchanges between his passionate subscribers, with this appeal in the May 1864 issue: 'We must protest against the tone of some of our correspondents' letters on this and other subjects and beg them to confine themselves strictly to the point in question. We cannot in future admit any letters containing personal remarks.'

Judging by the continuing insults between 'A Norrible Tail' and Edwin Lawrence, Gorton soon gave up trying to keep a polite tone. The *Astronomical Register* was a significant journal, flourishing from 1863 to 1886 and aimed purely at the amateur astronomer. Sandford Gorton, a wealthy businessman and keen amateur astronomer, ran his journal for love rather than profit and it was kept perilously afloat by subscribers, numbering seventy-five in 1863. Major professional figures in astronomy contributed to its pages, it became the vehicle for capturing the observations of astronomers across Britain, and plans were published through its pages for forming an Observing Astronomical Society. Many of the subscribers would have known each other and several were key

figures in the development of astronomy. One, Joseph Norman Lockyer, founded the periodical Nature in 1869, giving it a strong astronomical emphasis. Another subscriber, William Birt, was recognised as an expert on lunar objects.[159]

It was William Birt who in a letter to the Editor in June 1866 gave a beautifully calm and balanced review of points raised by different correspondents, and only has one mild jibe at 'A Norrible Tail' : 'It appears that "A Norrible Tail" was not long enough to reach a paragraph in a curious book entitled Cometomantia, published in 1684, by an anonymous author…'

Birt made no direct reference to Crestadoro but was sympathetic to theories from the past, to how the mysteries of light can mislead, and to Mr. Lawrence. Unlike 'A Norrible Tail' he did not seek to dismiss and conquer but to pick out the interesting details:

> The above extracts will show- first, that the idea broached by Mr. Lawrence is by no means new. Secondly, that the reflection from the moon's surface is very similar to that from the earth's. Its intense brightness, alluded to by J. W. Thomas, appears to arise from its being seen against a dark sky: If a small piece of paper be illuminated by a single ray from a lamp in a perfectly dark room, when none of the objects contained in it are visible, the paper will shine with much greater brilliancy than in ordinary daylight.

Crestadoro's venture into the reaches of space, with his neat projections of lantern beams and mathematical diagrams, is perhaps as innocent as his expectation that he has solicited 'inquiry with as much earnestness and anxiety as the most incredulous sceptic can possibly desire.' It was probably this modest humility that enraged J.F. of Sheerness and 'A Norrible Tail' as much as did the wild theories themselves.

## Manchester skies

There were no further astronomical observations from Crestadoro, not surprisingly as he was now living under Manchester's notoriously shrouded skies. Admirably, he recouped ground and moved on from cometic mysteries to make his own peculiar contributions to the emerging technology of manned flight. Despite the criticism, he must have been proud enough of his astronomical ventures to mention his authorship to his friends, as evidenced by its inclusion as one of his achievements in the *Manchester Guardian* obituary. In compiling the Catalogue of the Manchester Free Library, he created three entries under his own name for *An Astronomical Annual*, *The Art of Making Catalogues of Libraries* and *Du Pouvoir Temporel*. Others may have derided his theories but Crestadoro, whilst refraining from issuing more scientific papers, did not deny his authorship of an ingenious and simple solution to all cometic mysteries.

[148] 'Comets', *The Astronomical Register*, 4:41(May 1866) p.137

[149] Professor A. Crestadoro, 'Expected Return of the Great Comet of 1556; or The Cometic Mysteries Dissipated', in *An Astronomical Annual for 1854*, Part 2, 1-85

[150] Peter Grego, *Blazing a Ghostly Trail: ISON and Great Comets of the Past and Future* (Cham: Springer, 2014) p.105

[151] John E. Bortle, 'The Bright-Comet Chronicles', *International Comet Quarterly*, (1998) www.icq.eps.harvard.edu/bortle.html

[152] W.E.A. Axon 'Dr. Crestadoro', *Manchester Guardian*, 8 April 1879

[153] 'John Weale 1791-1862 publisher and writer on architecture', oxforddnb.com

[154] Laurence Scales, 'Agnes Clerke: an intense light on Victorian astronomy', (Royal Institution blog, 27 June 2014) www.rigb.org/blog/2014/june/agnes-clerke

[155] Lucy Jago, *The Northern Lights: How One Man Sacrificed Love, Happiness and Sanity to Unlock the Secrets of Space* (London: Hamilton, 2001)

[156] J.F.,'The Cometic Mysteries Dissipated', *Mechanics Magazine and Journal of Science, Arts, and Manufacturers* 59 (1853) pp.444 - 446

[157] ArtdeCiel, *'The Comet Man' William Usherwood (1821-1915)*, www.artdeciel.com/Exposure/post/2010/06/28/The-Comet-Man.aspx

[158] Shaun Belcher, *Donati's Comet* and '*Trailer Star R.I.P'* from *Moon over the Downs* CD, Super Tiny Records, 2003, www// trailerstar.bandcamp.com/track/donatis-comet-3

[159] Peter Johnson, 'The Astronomical Register 1863-86', Journal British Astronomical Association, 100 : 2, 1990 provided by NASA Astrophysics data System - web

# Chapter Seven: Doctor Crestadoro's Poker

> Now that the Manchester Public Library is housed in an all-electric building a useful article which had for two generations held an honoured place near the open fire in the chief librarian's room has been relegated to a Branch library where coal is still in use.
>
> It was known to the staff as 'Dr. Crestadoro's Poker.' Dr. Crestadoro was a former chief librarian, who, besides being a great bibliographer, was of a mechanical turn of mind and the inventor of many contrivances, none of which, however, was commercially successful.[160]

## Mechanical Experiment

Invention was a lifelong passion for Crestadoro. Staff and readers at Manchester were proud of their unusual Chief Librarian, a man who could empathise with both scholarly and mechanical aspirations. They were especially when he rubbed shoulders with the likes of Sir William Fairbairn, the engineer.

Axon gave a succinct summary of Crestadoro's enduring interest:

> Throughout his life he was fond of mechanical experiments, and in 1849 he came to England in order to push his inventions. In 1852, when resident at Salford, he patented 'certain improvements in impulsoria.' He took out other patents in 1852, 1862, 1868, and 1873. None of these came into practical use. One of them relates to aerial locomotion, and a model of his metallic balloon was shown at the Crystal Palace in June 1868, and a description of it was printed. The failure of his early patents led him to undertake bibliographical work…[161]

Although commercial failures, Crestadoro's inventions sprung from contemporary concerns, and in some cases his notions captured the public's imagination. As well as the patents, he came up with a couple of minor notions that were independently brought into practical application, one over a century later. These ideas were saved from oblivion by fortuitous mentions in letters. There were probably more improvements for his household and library that are lost to us. Crestadoro clearly was a gadget man and it is tempting to imagine Mrs. Crestadoro together with the young Mary A. Caffrel (as listed in the 1871 census as general servant at their house at 21 Rumford Street, Manchester), testing out contrivances that may or may not have improved the heavy duties of their lives.

## More than an inventor

Crestadoro played a significant role in facilitating other inventors. Later on we shall see how his pamphlet, *The Art of Making Catalogues*, influenced the catalogue of the POL, making technical information accessible in a new way.

The index catalogues he developed for Manchester Free Libraries became a model for the new Free Libraries, and without them aspiring inventors would not have identified the books and content of serials as readily as they did. Crestadoro's index catalogues were exactly what was needed at the time and they were produced promptly, unlike the classified or the manuscript catalogues that took forever to complete.

As Chief Librarian he gave priority to the maintenance and organisation of the patent specifications. These collections ensured inventors did not waste their time, ignorant of earlier efforts. It also gave them a view of what was being developed at the cutting edge of technology.

The free provision of patent specifications was due to the Lancastrian manufacturer and inventor, Bennet Woodcroft. An early advocate of Free Libraries, Woodcroft's reforms at the PO delivered immeasurable benefit to readers and to industry as a whole. In 1853, his patent lists were bought for the nation for £1,000. From now over a hundred libraries, including Free Libraries, Mechanics' Institutes, railway station libraries, colonial libraries as well as various societies and public offices received free sets of specification records from the Commissioners of Patents, a liberal policy that was eventually reduced in the twentieth century. The PO's publication and distribution programme became the envy of the world.

As an inventor, as well as librarian, Crestadoro understood how vital it was to properly manage these free collections of specifications.

## Inventomaniacs

For most inventors trying to make a living through patents was a heart-breaking affair. Charles Dickens illustrated this in *A Poor man's tale of a Patent* and again in *Little Dorrit* with the heroic inventor, Daniel Doyce, broken by the endless delays of the Circumlocution Office. As the nineteenth century progressed the cumbersome pre-1852 procedures of trailing through thirty or so separate departments, obtaining a warrant at each, could no longer be sustained. Expert witnesses on different committees, including Bennet Woodcroft, Henry Cole, Charles Dickens, John Lewis Ricardo, Isambard Kingdom Brunel and William Fairbairn gave their views. Although the Patent Law Amendment Act of 1852 that followed was unsatisfactory in many respects, it did provide Commissioners of Patents, a new office for patents, and ensured publication of specifications.

## Cost of Patents

Even before the 1852 reform, which unified patent systems across the United Kingdom, the English patent system had been admired as a stimulus to invention.

The 1852 Patent Law Amendment Act cut fees drastically. But the cost was still beyond most working people. There was concern that the very best minds were therefore being excluded and campaigners pressed for further reduction. Against this came the argument that high costs served to deter the frivolous. The debates went on and at one stage the patent system itself was at risk, being seen as an impediment to industry. The further reforms of the 1883 Act saved the situation.

Until this Act brought in some checks, the cost had not included any examination of the patent. The inventor who had not searched properly, or avoided paying an agent, took the risk of later being taken to court. This is why it was critical for patent specifications to be made available in the Free Libraries.

It was lucky for Crestadoro that he took out patents after the 1852 Act with the lower charges of £25 for each patent: £5 on application and £20 on filing the specification.

However, payments for renewals had to be made at the end of each three year and seven year period. This much hated part of the 1852 legislation was seen as making the UK patent system more expensive than that of the USA, France, Belgium or Prussia. The renewal system actually meant that the overall cost was higher than under the pre-1852 legislation if the inventor chose to renew.

Crestadoro did not complete the process for all his patents, or renew, and so avoided full costs.

The main purpose of renewal was to deter 'the deluded dreamer' as one inventor, John Standfield described it.[162] He identified two other categories. There were the employers who could afford the average cost of £190 for a fully renewed patent, including an agent's fee, and their applications were generally serious and useful. The other category, potentially valuable, were the working men who could not afford to take out a patent and therefore had no means to protect their inventions or indeed inducement to even bother inventing.

John Standfield was writing in 1879. From his point of view Crestadoro would have fallen into the category of 'the deluded dreamer'. Even if he had a prospect of success, it is unlikely that Crestadoro could have paid the cost of renewing his early patents. Library staff were on low wages. Crestadoro, by comparison to his colleagues achieved an enviably high salary, starting at £250 in 1864 and ending at £400 in 1879, the equivalent of just under £20,000 in 2014. He may have been comfortable but to complete and renew all his patents would have cost hundreds: renewal fees were £50 at three years and £100 at seven years. His last patent, on fire grates, would have been the one most likely to be put into practical application, but he died before that required renewal.

In the case of one patent, his voice tube idea, Crestadoro may not have completed the specification process because he recognized that this could never be modelled. For Crestadoro believed that inventions had to be made to operate before they had credibility.

## Crestadoro on Patent Law Reform

In a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* on 1 June 1875, Crestadoro wrote tellingly of his experience as an inventor, and as ever proposed a simple solution to a complex issues, in this case, Patent Law. It is clear from this letter that Crestadoro did not regard himself as a dreamer but as a practical engineer. His proposal is firmly based on the freedom to have real trials of inventions without

risking intellectual property theft. Unlike some of Crestadoro's simple solutions, for example, suffrage or taxation reform, his idea forcefully confronts the conflict between protecting and encouraging invention.

The letter is the one piece of evidence of Crestadoro's perceptions of himself as an inventor, and it is true that although his inventions did not achieve success most were at least trialled or modelled:

> It is indispensable to a practical protection of the inventor as well as of the public, and greatly to the benefit of all parties, to allow inventors to disclose freely from their inventions, rather than lock up their proceedings from the public. No discovery can be shown to be new and useful until tested by experiment, and whatever time it took, whether six months or six years, to effect this, if the author or authors of the improvements and of their realisation can establish their claim, the Law should not stand in the way of a just remuneration.
>
> Such a plan would be well adapted to the end of giving certainty, legitimacy, and a tangible value to an invention from its inception, as it would enable the inventor to obtain without fear of publicity, the assistance of capital to ascertain in full daylight the merit of the invention before further expenses and waste of time and labour are incurred.

## Samuel Smiles: chronicler of Victorian inventors

As Bennet Woodcroft saved the literature and artifacts of Victorian invention, so did Samuel Smiles, the famous author of *Self-help*,[163] record the inventors themselves. A great debt is owed to Samuel Smiles who was the first to compile the memoirs and lives of 'men of invention and industry', and demand respect for them. His information laid the foundation for future studies of industrial history.

Immersed in the railway business as well as journalism, Smiles realised the importance of capturing this early industrial history. He took the radical approach of interviewing his subjects wherever possible, thus preserving the authentic details and thoughts of such figures as George and Robert Stephenson, even if, as later researchers suspected, not always questioning what he was told. As the *DNB* entry for Smiles declares: 'He almost invented the subject of business history'.[164]

## Crestadoro – Connecting Ideas

Samuel Smiles was always curious about the motivation that drove his subjects. How would he have viewed Crestadoro? Smiles must have known of him and may well have met him, for his brother, Robert Wilson Smiles, preceded Crestadoro as Chief Librarian at Manchester and took an interest in his inventions, wishing in one letter that his ideas would one day bear material reward.[165]

There were hordes of would be inventors and Crestadoro was one of these lowly ranks rather than a practical achiever of the kind who appealed to Samuel Smiles. He was one of those inventors whose projects, like Mr. Edgworth's sailing carriage, were: 'consequently left to repose in the limbo of the Patent Office, with thousands of other equally useless though ingenious contrivances.'[166] Crestadoro, by his own account, feasted on the thoughts of great men. When he produced ideas, there is in consequence an odd mixture of pedantry, originality, of propositions that soon are lost in baffling technical detail. Like the inventors who overwhelmed the busy George Stephenson by 'crude and wild theories believed in only by their projectors',[167] his fancies ran away with him and he had unrealistic expectations. Yet he had a redeeming bent for models and tinkering with machinery that did produce 'some improvements'.

The perseverance, with which Crestadoro pursued his notions of transport, aerial locomotion and communication, as well as his wish to benefit humanity and unite nations, would have surely gained some sympathy from Smiles.

As regards the psychology and inspiration that drove Crestadoro, there is his Piarist background with the emphasis on education, science and technology, there is his degree in natural philosophy which would have had a strong physics and mathematics content, his immersion in scholarly learning, his own scientific and mechanical bent, and there is the overall lodestar, his unifying idea which gives coherence to the disparate elements.

Crestadoro's inventions and ideas were largely focused on connections between people and nations, through the linking of ideas, ancient and modern, through transport systems, through the mechanics of audio communication, and through what became his profession, opening up to readers the content of books, serials, conferences, papers and patents. His vision went further. In *The Art of Making Catalogues* he envisaged all objects and information about them being made known through some sort of universal networking. He sought ways to improve links between the peoples of the world and so achieve peace. The pattern of his approach was one of both lateral thinking and the need to find simple solutions.

It is interesting to consider Crestadoro in relation to this view from Jared Diamond: 'In fact, many of inventions were developed by people driven by curiosity or by a love of tinkering, in the absence of any initial demand for the product they had in mind. Once a device had been invented, the inventor then had to find an application for it.'[168] Certainly the curiosity and tinkering apply, but Crestadoro's designs were aimed at answering contemporary needs. As well as the grander schemes he also aimed at developing gadgets to make domestic or working life easier. He did not take out a patent for these ideas, though ironically he might have made money had he done so.

## Italy's loss and England's Gain

It is fair to say that Italy did not produce the conditions that would tempt the innovative to stay. Society was generally stagnant, not supportive of the aspiring middle classes, poverty rife and the restrictions imposed by church, despots and foreign forces intolerable. In contrast, by the early nineteenth century, Britain was already forged into the leader of the modern industrial world.

The entertaining Joseph Baretti, Dr. Johnson's friend, pondered on Italy's reluctance to join in the race for industry. He approved the contrast that the Italians were content with their favourable climate and fertile land and did not suffer the greed of the English and the Dutch. He perceptively saw that in the industrial age the workers would toil long and hard, enriching only their employers: 'I like not to see our poor employed in occupations that kill some and harass many,'[169] Baretti also blamed the Jesuits for the suppression of Italian science: 'Before the institution of their order we had such a number of men eminent in various branches of science, from (a) Dante down to (b) Galileo, as few, if any, of the modern nations can show'[170].

These are sweeping generalisations and of course there were exceptions, science and exploration were encouraged at different stages under different regimes.

Avoidance of conscription to the foreign service of France or Austria was another inducement for young Italians to seek their fortunes abroad. Italy's loss was England's gain. (It was also Ireland's gain when Smiles' hero, Charles Bianconi, arrived there in 1802, and transformed rural transport.) Italian craftsmen constructed the fine brickwork of the Crystal Palace Subway, and enhanced houses and public buildings with their mosaics, picture frames and mirrors. Italians were skilled in

instrument making. From the eighteenth century Italian firms had prospered in Manchester and Liverpool, supplying the shipping trade. The craftsmen who devised instruments such as barometers, lenses, pumps and other gadgets were highly valued as the ability to measure and control was critical to advances in science, navigation, exploration and technology. Early Italian settlers in Manchester reflected these trades, and became a factor in making the city attractive to engineers, chemists and physicists. There is, intriguingly, one Crestadoro listed in the eighteenth century in Manchester:

> In 1790 the fustian trader C Alberti operated his business from an office in Brazenose Street and the families Ronchetti, Casartelli, Merone, Zanetti, Bolongaro, Peduzzi, Bianchi, Caminada, Aglio, Crestadoro, Pizzotti, Introvini, Bodoano, CaDrani, Maini and Pedrani became established specialists in a wide range of trades and occupations which assisted the spiralling growth of both industry and commerce.[171]

In 1927, a correspondent in the *Manchester Guardian* referred to the great firms established by Italians in the city, their activities as art dealers, sculptors and modellers, the distinguished professionals in various fields (amongst them Crestadoro and a fellow Genoese, Don Ruspini, who was clerk to the School Board), as well as the nearly hundred mosaic workers brought over from Italy to create the wonderful marble floors of the New Town Hall: 'A number of "Mosaicisti" remained here, and their sons are pursuing this ancient art in Manchester and district.'[172]

## Crestadoro's Patents

Crestadoro took out five patents between 1852 and 1873:

1852 *(GB300/1852) Impulsoria*

1852 *(GB734/1852) Communicating between Distant Places*

1862 *(GB1786/1862) Motive power from Rarefied Air*

1868 *(GB1815/1867) Aerial Navigation*

1873 *(GB3788/1873) Fire-grates*.

The 1862 and 1868 patents are covered in the next chapter: this chapter deals with the other miscellany of his inventions, both patented and unpatented.

## Paddle Steamers

As described in Chapter Five, the 1852 *GB300/1852 Patent, Certain Improvements in Impulsoria* was used to improve Masserano's Impulsoria but it could also be adapted for other transport mechanisms on road, rail or water. Crestadoro bundled together all sorts of bits and pieces, perhaps with the aim of avoiding the cost of separate patents. This was Crestadoro's only fully completed patent but there is no evidence he ever renewed it.

The *Scientific American* picked up the paddle steamer part of Crestadoro's *Certain Improvements in Impulsoria* and gave the idea and its inventor short shrift.

Rashly, he had ventured into the area where the Americans were supreme, the paddle steamers. The various histories of steamboats show the usual complex mix of inventors, engines, patents and monopolies. An Englishman, Jonathan Hulls, is credited with patenting steamboats in 1737, but it was the Scottish engineer, William Symington who was the first in 1788 to build and launch steam-powered paddle boats. Matthew Boulton and James Watt are discredited for blocking the development of steam vehicles and vessels in England by their restrictive control of patents.

Scotland and America surged ahead.

There were working steamboats of sorts on American rivers from the 1780s onwards.

Steamships were ideally suited to the colossal waterways of America; their advent transformed Louisiana and by 1815 they had become the dominant form of commercial transport, twenty years before railways were enabled to progress with the invention of wrought-iron rails. America was ahead of the world for its steamboats: 'the Mississippi paddle-steamer became the great symbol of American industrial progress and wealth.'[173] Paddles could be at the rear or at the side; screw propellers started to appear around 1849, only viable as iron started to replace wood for ship construction. It was a highly developed technical industry.

Crestadoro, with his passion for barrels, cylinders and drums, had the temerity to suggest that the Americans had got it wrong:

> What I claim is, the construction and applications of water-tight cylindrical drums made of timber or other suitable material, with proper shafts, and arranged as described, for the express purpose of propelling, the object being to substitute the plain surface of cylinders to the use of paddles or blades, the later being considered as a mistake similar to that of the apprehended insufficiency of the adhesion of the wheels on the road to propel the carriage, which materially retarded the progress of the locomotive engine, until it had been proved fallax.

The *Scientific American* quotes an unidentified article from an English paper that seriously considered the idea. The *Scientific American* commentator then demolishes the whole concept with a devastating attack:

> There is a decided mistake in the conclusions of Prof. Crestadoro. No mortal man but himself, we believe, ever would suppose that paddle wheels were invented because it was believed that broad sheathed wheels would slide on the surface; such an idea never was entertained, consequently no such mistake as that referred to was ever made in the case of steamboats. The two modes of propulsion are entirely different, the one is by traction, the other by the displacement of an incompressible fluid. Now, the action of a rigid body passing over another rigid body, is altogether different from what it would be if propelled through a fluid. We have also to state that drums have been tried as substitutes for paddles, but as might be expected, proved utterly incompetent. We cannot see how a man of science permitted himself to be led away by such an idea as that set forth in the above extract.[174]

The *Year-Book of Facts in Science and Art* gave a paragraph to 'New Propeller', ending on a dubious note: 'It is to be hoped that it is not the mere analogy of the iron bite of the rail, but practical experiment which has called forth a patent like this.'[175]

## Self-Promotion Again

As was standard in newspaper communication, similar pieces appeared across the world, ending in the southern hemisphere with articles in Australian and New Zealand newspapers. The *Maitland Mercury and the Hunter River General Advertiser* gave the full version of the English article that the *Scientific American* quoted and then this letter, starting as follows:

> A NEW PROPELLER.
>
> -The Daily News of |Saturday contained the following interesting letter from a

> correspondent – 'At a moment when the steam communications are so important to this country, I hope I may be excused for attempting to call your attention to a curiously interesting scheme for propelling vessels, just secured under the new patent law by Professor A Crestadoro.'[176]

It is fairly certain that this anonymous correspondent is Crestadoro himself, using the same method he employed for bringing attention to his cometic theories. The innocent reference to another newspaper, 'The Daily News of Saturday', the emphasis on the importance of the invention, the numerical details, the dismissal of established practices as fallacies ripe for improvement, the whole style of the article are all pure Crestadoro. Again, under the guise of a disinterested correspondent, he publicised his own invention. He quotes other sources, has facts and figures and takes a business like approach.

He raised valid points on the problems of paddles, and these would be solved eventually by the screw propeller, but no one as far as I know ever attempted a practical application of Crestadoro's cylindrical propeller. Crestadoro, as the anonymous correspondent, ended the piece on strong note: 'Surely when so many and large interests are at stake as are represented by the steam navigation, those who are engaged in the great steam communications should give it a fair trial. In a heavy sea, where the rolling of the vessel is considerable, what a difference between a paddle-wheel and a plain cylinder?'

Professor Crestadoro seems to have become rather a character on the patent scene, but not in the way he would have wished.

## Rapid Communications

1852: *GB734/1852 Communicating between Distant Places.*

*Provisional Specification left by Andrew Crestadoro at the Office of the Commissioners of Patents, with his Petition, on the 13th November 1852.*

*(Void by reason of notice to proceed not having been given within 5 the time prescribed by the Act.) I, Professor Andrew Crestadoro, of Genoa, in Italy, but now resident in Darlington Place, Vauxhall, in the County of Surrey do hereby declare the nature of the said Invention for 'Improvements in Rapid Communication between Distant Places and Countries" to be as follows…*

Crestadoro's second patent was not listed in the *Year Book of Facts in Science and Art* which seems to be a source the *Scientific American* used, and this may explain the absence of their comment on Professor Crestadoro's new direction in invention. Presumably the Patents had to reach the Complete Specification stage before their contents would be fully reported, and Crestadoro left this one in limbo.

Crestadoro must have recognised the weakness of this patent. There is theory and calculations but no practical experiments for proof, only supposition that a certain effect would hold true on any scale. In addition Crestadoro is obviously unsure of exactly what he is claiming in the patent:

> My Said Improvements consist,—1st, in the discovery that, in transmitting rapid communications, the velocity of sound, when applied in a proper manner, can supersede, with great advantages, the electric or magnetic telegraph, as it is at present in use; 2d, consequently in a new application of an old and well-known principle, that is to say, the action of speaking or producing sounds through suitable speaking-pipes and apparatus, to a purpose and object to which hitherto they have not been applied, viz., to telegraphic and

> other purposes, or rapid communications between distant places and countries. The said new application, in conjunction with the said discovery, constitutes the novelty of my said improvements, and the following are the peculiar principles on which they are based.

As usual Crestadoro took an offbeat angle, pursuing alternative and simplistic notions and missing the direction of future technology. And yet he was right in what he is proposing, the superior communicative power of the human voice across vast distances, rather than the electric telegraph. The difference between Crestadoro and the inventors of the telephone is that he confined himself to speaking pipes, not advancing to transmission of the voice through electromagnetic transmitters.

Crestadoro seems to have been working on a sophisticated version of the child's toy of two tin cans connected by string, with the idea that different speakers would boost the message on, in a sort of global Chinese whispers. Whether this would ever have rivalled the speed of telegraph messages as Crestadoro optimistically claimed is extremely dubious. Sadly, Crestadoro is on the right track in one sense but he fatally rejected the possibilities of voice and electricity, preferring his solution of 'insulated air'.

So Crestadoro made the imaginative leap of voice transmission and, had he not taken the wrong path for the method, he might have joined those who were grasping at the transmission of voice on electromagnetic circuits. This convoluted provisional specification is a near miss in Crestadoro's career as an inventor.

Crestadoro produced his patent just before the developments of the electric telephone. Antonio Meucci developed his 'telettrofoni', electromagnetic transmitters for sending and receiving, between 1852-1856. But Crestadoro might have been aware of Meucci's acoustic telephone, installed in the Teatro della pergola in Florence in 1834, and still functioning there today.[177] This was based on the pipe-telephones of ships and again Crestadoro would have been aware of these.

Basically, Crestadoro's vision was inspired by the wonder of countries being able to communicate almost directly via the telegraph, and he could see a way to improve this. He was well aware of conventional voice pipes and was merely laying claim to expanding the scale to connect distant countries, though he is vague on exactly how he would progress his idea: 'while the human voice can speak great many times faster, to say nothing of the extreme simplicity of such machinery as the human voice, when compared with the electric instruments and apparatus, and with the uncertainty attached to the same, from meteorological disturbances.'

Crestadoro turned to the tin can method rather than to electric circuits for transmission of human speech. He saw 'insulated air' as an alternative to electric conducting wire and curiously gave his opinion that light is nothing but electricity, though how this relates to the velocity of sound is not clear. Crestadoro calculated in detail the cubic content of the 3,000 mile long voice pipe needed to connect England and America, basing his measurements on the interior of the Bank of England Rotunda as well as the Freemason's Hall, Great Queen Street. As the pipe would be 5,390 cubic feet, twenty-three times smaller than the 126,477 cubic feet of the Rotunda, where sound can be heard at any point, ergo the pipe will work: 'the same phenomenon of the sound will take place'. There is a sort of crazy logic to this, but it is a mercy that *Mechanics' Magazine* did not produce a correspondent to demolish it all. The only expert I asked, the sound engineer from Stateless, Rod Buchanan-Dunlop, read the patent but could only shake his head and classify it as fantasy. He was amazed that Crestadoro claimed to be a professor as he displayed no understanding of physical principles.

## Telecommunication

The strange phenomenon of telecommunication enthralled great minds, in some cases leading them to all sorts of beliefs in telepathy, spiritualism, and messages from beyond the grave. W.T. Stead, 'the Newspaper Revolutionary', died on the Titanic: the tragedy was caused in part by the human failures in the new technology of communication that he loved. His family continued to receive messages from him, courtesy of a medium, Pardoe Woodman, as published ten years later by his daughter.[178] In the context where the likes of W.T. Stead, Alfred Wallace, Sir Oliver Lodge, Rider Haggard and Arthur Conan Doyle could be manipulated by the wielders of collapsible trumpets and floating linen, Crestadoro's ideas were at least firmly embedded in physical tubing.

## Missed Opportunities of the Voice Pipe

A particular refinement that Crestadoro made in his patent was insulation. He considered this in the materials used for the voice pipe and in the design of the receiving chambers where the operators could capture the messages and transmit. This, at least, was practical.

Indeed, lagging was later used on the marine voice pipes to reduce acoustic interference. As well as missing out on fame by rejecting the connection of voice and electricity, Crestadoro missed out on the chance of making profit from a very commercial improvement to the conventional voice pipes. The idea is there in his calculations but unfortunately he did not exploit it. Insulated voice pipes for steamers were introduced into England in 1897. My father experienced them on warships in the Second World War. They still connect wheelhouse and binnacle on some modern ships, in case of blackout.

Crestadoro's vision of global communication by direct voice is admirable but Patent No. 734 really represents two lost opportunities for Crestadoro, voice pipe insulation and the telephone. The first voice transmission was realised in 1876 by Bell and Watson, and then made practical for long distance by Edison's invention in 1878 of the carbon grain transmitter which enabled a strong voice signal.

## The Lean Back

There is a letter in the unindexed Original Papers of the BM Archive from Crestadoro to Panizzi, detailing Crestadoro's marvellous invention for readers to work standing up.

This is Crestadoro's letter in full :

> 17 Tottenham Court Rd
>
> 12 Dec 1859
>
> Sir
>
> Being frequently obliged to work all day in the Reading Room I have long felt the want of some sort of accomodation [sic] as should enable a reader, to whose health sitting all day is injurious, to do his work in a standing position.
>
> Having lately chanced to hear several readers complaining of the same want I venture to mention the matter to you, impressed as I am with a notion that you would exercise your influence to procure to the readers this additional boon if at all possible or consistent with the general regulations.

> I beg to add, merely for the sake of avoiding the reproach that I point out a desideratum without suggesting some way or other as to how to meet it, that one out of the two present corner seats near the shelves in every bend might afford the desired accomodation [sic] by substituting to the present appliances in front of the reader, a movable table or desk turning on suitable hinges at the upper end, so that when its lower end is lifted and fixed it offers a writing desk to a standing person, and when it is again let down and shut, the place becomes again a sitting place as at present with scarcely any affluent alteration.
>
> The inkstand might be fixed exactly at the outer end of the line which at present divides one place from another, or at the corresponding outer corner, if on the right hand. In this manner it could be conveniently reached by a reader whether in a standing or sitting position.
>
> I would avail myself of the opportunity and take the liberty to submit that perhaps it would be better if even every inkstand in the Reading Room was so fixed instead of as it is at present; for I have more than once happened to observe blots of ink actually droping [sic] from the pen of readers on books beneath the inkstand,
>
> I beg you will excuse my intrusion and remain Sir
>
> Your most obedient servant
>
> A Crestadoro
>
> The Principal Librarian
>
> British Museum

Crestadoro did not patent this excellent idea but merely sent it as a suggestion to the Principal Librarian, and that was an end to the matter. The note in the BM Letter Book is simply: 'Reply from Panizzi, 28/1/60, that Crestadoro's letter of 12 Dec was laid before the Trustees on 14 January and they made no order thereon.'

As P. R. Harris commented: 'Panizzi would not have taken kindly to any suggestion for alteration in the cataloguing rules which he had derived, or in the arrangements of the new Reading Room of which he was so proud!'[179] (Crestadoro had already pursued Panizzi with the helpful suggestions for the BM in his *Art of Making Catalogues*).

In January 2005, the BL introduced the Lean Back chair into the open spaces of St Pancras, announced variously in the press as the BL modern alternative to the good old chair. The *Evening Standard* of Tuesday, 25 January 2005, described it as follows:

> It's not a chair, because you don't sit on it. It's not a sofa, either. It's a Lean Back, so called because - yes, that's right- you lean back on it. Leaning it would seem, is the new sitting. The Lean Back consists of a 6ft 6in length of wood set at an angle of 17 degrees off the vertical with cushioned upholstery for the back and a plinth for the feet, and apparently it is going to revolutionise office life.

The Lean Backs have become a feature at the BL St Pancras, and look very good indeed with readers lounging elegantly against the sculptured strips of pale wood, with smartphones, laptops, documents and coffee to hand. Strangely enough the Swedish suppliers did not seem keen on marketing the Lean Back, perhaps only a minority would ever like the notion. According to the then Estates Manager, Stephen Hanger: 'The leanbacks were put in originally as part of an exhibition of 'wi-fi furniture' in 2005. As far as I can tell from the records, there were never more than the four

we have now – we bought them from the supplier (Kinnarps) who have never seemed very keen to promote them or sell more of them.' Somehow this oddity seems appropriate for a Crestadoro type invention.The Lean Back is a similar solution from the same problem that Crestadoro identified, suited as much to inkstands as to laptops. Crestadoro was tall, lean in physique, and probably suffered from backache as he spent long days in both the old and the magnificent new Reading Rooms of the BM.

I have not been able to trace whether Crestadoro made any provision in the Manchester Free Libraries to enable the reader to move flexibly between sitting and standing, or to adjust the equipment to suit. Given the odd reference to his contrivances in the Manchester Letter Books it is quite likely he did so.

## The Sliding Weight Door

Mr. B. Chadwick, the librarian of the Hulme Branch library in Manchester, wrote to his Chief Librarian, Andrea Crestadoro, on 7 March 1873, reporting that the spring of a door leading to the newsroom had broken and 'complaints will doubtless be made about draughts'. He continued:

> I would suggest that instead of the old spring being replaced the door should be fitted with the sliding weights invented by you, which is not so liable to get out of order. At present only two of our doors [I was just this weekend admiring weighted gates!] are so fitted, one of each pair being kept closed by means of a bolt : it is I think desirable that all the doors should be fitted with the sliding weight.[180]

The history of doors is overwhelmingly profuse and scattered: their handles, knockers, hinges, ingenious devices to make them slide, float, rise over carpets, exclude draughts is recorded through a wide range of modern and ancient texts, but the tale is a rambling one with no certainty of who invented what. The Romans were keen on hinges (hinges had their own goddess, Cardea, who was also fond of beans) but did not use them for doors. There is a patent for a Mr. Jackson in 1797 that describes using springs to shut doors.[181]

What inspired Crestadoro's idea of sliding weights? In Turin I had seen the heavy balances used to lift up massive church doors, as in the church of Gran Madre di Dio, built between 1818 and 1831 to commemorate the reinstatement of Vittorio Emanuele I. A dominant and significant neo-classical structure, it surely would have been familiar to Crestadoro. The doors and their weights are a memorable feature.

Fig.12 Sliding weight, Turin

Or perhaps inspiration came from the workshops of Vauxhall or Salford? Sliding weights were used in the construction of furnaces. There are descriptions such as this for the furnaces that a Mr. Atkinson built: 'A sliding door, balanced by a weight, in the manner of a sash window, has many advantages – it is more easily opened and shut; it is out of the way when open, and shuts close; when any thing is to be done at the fire, a smaller opening suffices.'[182]

The doors at Hulme Branch library may have been sliding doors or traditional: it is frustrating that Crestadoro did not produce a patent to illustrate what so delighted Mr. Chadwick.

The new showpiece building for the Hulme Branch library, sited next to Hulme Town Hall, was opened on the evening of 15 June 1866. The Chair of the Manchester Free Libraries Committee, Thomas Baker, proclaimed 'The design of the new building originated in the surveyors' department of the Manchester Town Hall. How well it was adapted for the purpose, had been mentioned to him by many persons that night. The newsroom was fit for a queen to read in.'[183]

Fig.13 Hulme Reading Room

There is a photograph of Hulme Branch library Reading Room in W.R. Credland's history of the Manchester Free Libraries: tantalisingly, the doors are there in the background, but too distant to reveal details of the mechanism.[184]

Crestadoro's sliding weight invention worked well: did the device then appear in other Manchester Council buildings? As with the insulation of the speaking tube, Crestadoro may have missed out on a financial opportunity.

## The Chimney of the World

1873: *GB3788/1873 Fire-grates. Letters Patent to Andrea Crestadoro, of No. 21, Rumford Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, for the Invention of "Improvements in the Construction of Domestic and other Fire-grates." Sealed the 13th February, 1874, and dated the 21st November 1873. Provisional Specification left by the said Andrea Crestadoro at the Office of the Commissioners of Patents, with his Petition, on the 21st November 1873.*

This patent is the only one that relates not to communication and transport but to mechanisms to improve everyday life. In *Fire-grates* Crestadoro tackled one of the major problems of industrial cities.

As well as a couple of years in Salford in the Impulsoria period, Crestadoro moved to Manchester in 1862 and died there in 1879. Manchester was a haven where he found security, steady income, status and some limited time to devote to his ideas. But it was a polluted and dangerous environment, the air poisoned with the filthy clouds of industrial waste. Thick dark clouds shrouded the city, choking to slow death people, trees, plants, birds: everything living under the black pall was affected. There are accounts after accounts from Defoe onwards of the horror felt by observers of this almost corporal monster that suffocated and poisoned the city below.

As well as the title of Cottonopolis, Manchester, sunk on its low plain, where everything as if touched by a deadly Midas, turned black, was also known as 'The Chimney of the World'. The saying is attributed to General Napier, reluctant controller of the 1839 Chartist gathering on Kersal Moor, who added 'the entrance to hell realised'.[185]

Crestadoro wrote to Axon on 10 July1868, rejoicing in his holiday on the Isle of Wight, in the flowers and fresh air that reminded him of Italy: 'I am just 'doing' the Isle of Wight, truly the Italy of England: no smoke, the sky so lovely and the scenery and vegetation so charming.'[186] He was not alone in revelling in 'no smoke'. Manchester workers, whenever they could, fled to the restorative air of places such as Southport, Blackpool, the Lake District or North Wales. Even before legislated holidays increased their free time, many workers tended to be absent after pay day, those who could escaping from the filth of the city. Railway excursions tended to be on Saturdays and Mondays: the old rural tradition of 'Saint Monday' having migrated to the industrial regions.

Pollution was a horrendous blight in Manchester but was also a source of pride: smoke meant industry and industry meant money. The city developed ways to cope. Great public parks were created as green lungs, though the trees and flowers struggled feebly against the smogs that eventually defeated them. The colossal pall of dark murky smoke, the black film of grease coated every leaf and sulphurous poison dripped down in the rain. Even grass would not grow in Ancoats acid soil. My father, teaching in the 1930s, remembered the cut knees from the boys playing football on cinder pitches.

Trees rotted, flowering plants withered and animal life suffered. John Plant, Crestadoro's colleague at Salford Free Library, recorded the decline in bird life at Peel Park over three decades, dropping from seventy-one varieties at the start to a pitiful five at the end. Only the dark peppered moth, spawn of the industrial revolution, flourished, evolving its soot- coloured camouflage. Gardeners had to discover which trees and plants could survive, some still evident now as common city species.

From the early 1840s, enlightened scientists and reformers campaigned for smoke-abatement and control of the industrialists, pouring their sulphurous waste from thousands of factory chimneys. As householders turned to coal as the main fuel, thousands more domestic chimneys added to the blight. It was a long struggle, only finally won in the 1950s.

My mother disapproved of the cleaning of the great civic buildings that started in the 1970s. Like many Mancunians, she thought the black walls were magnificent. However, she welcomed the 1956 Clean Air Act : the foul smogs dissipated and it was no longer necessary to wash the soot off curtains every week. As a child, I remember well the devotion with which I washed the oily filth off privet leaves so my stick insects could survive.

## Fire Grate Rationale

So what may seem a strange departure for Crestadoro, his patent on fire grates sealed in 1874, is in fact evidence of his absorption into Manchester life. As Chief Librarian he continually wrestled with the problems of heating in both the Reference and the branch libraries, and like any other Manchester citizen the efficiency of his domestic fire, in terms of heat output and control of smoke, would have been critical to him.

Despite attempts to persuade them otherwise, the Victorians resisted the idea of the cleaner, more efficient stoves that were in use on the continent. The open hearth represented comfort. Closing the curtains against the external gloom, creating your own snug fire and turning to all those ingenious games were ways of coping with harsh reality. Affording fuel was key: poverty took away both warmth and food, and so devastated its victims.

There was early recognition that coal was not in endless supply. In 1860, for example, an early green inventor, Augustine Mouchot, developed a solar powered steam generation system, the sun motor mirror, to drive industrial machinery in case fossil fuels ran out.[187] What would happen if one day Britain would come to the end of the reserves on which her industrial greatness relied? There was a huge campaign in Manchester to redesign the industrial boilers, furnaces and chimneys both to combat pollution and to burn precious fuel more efficiently.

The environmental historian, Stephen Mosley, chronicled the entire saga of Manchester and its smoke in *The Chimney of the World; A History of Smoke Pollution in Victorian and Edwardian Manchester*[188]. In three parts, he details the effects of smoke pollution, the way in which Mancunians understood their smoky world, and the strategies developed to control the problem. This is a fascinating interdisciplinary book which tells the story of Manchester in a new but relevant perspective. It strikes home immediately to any Mancunian who experienced the city smogs before the Clean Air Act.

Stephen Mosley details the history of the engineering responses to the two key needs: effective consumption of coal and clean disposal of waste gases.

## Fire Grate Patent

In this context, it is apparent that Crestadoro aimed at killing two birds with one stone with his patent. His proposals for the fire grate were aimed at fuel efficiency by use of the waste gases. He stated this clearly:

> The object of this Invention is to facilitate the useful consumption of smoke, to effect a saving in fuel, and to dispense with scuttles or other separate coal holders…In consequence of the coal gradually acquiring a high temperature while in the receptacles the gases evolved by it, when brought into contact with the ignited fuel, instead of being wasted in the form of smoke, are converted into and utilized as flame, thereby causing a proportionate saving in the consumption of fuel.

The approach Crestadoro took was to have lateral chambers constructed above the fire where coal was stored. The coal was warmed by the smoke and then in turn fed into the fire. His explanations are clear and he provides a large accompanying diagram, 'Drawn on Stone by Malt by & Sons' to reinforce understanding:

> For this purpose the fire-grate is so constructed and arranged that it holds its own stock of coal in lateral receptacles or chambers one on each side of the grate. These receptacles

> form an inner appendage to the fire-grate in the wall recess usually appointed as a space for the fire-grate, and are formed in brickwork or made of sheet, wrought or cast iron or other suitable material. At each side of the grate a suitable opening communicates with the corresponding receptacle to allow of the passage of coal from the receptacle into the grate when required. Each opening is fitted with a suitable door or damper to open or close the communication as required. The receptacles are filled with coal at the top through suitable apertures fitted with suitable doors placed at a convenient height in the same room, in a room above, or in a back room, the construction of the receptacles being arranged accordingly.
>
> The operation is as follows; - When the fire requires feeding a fresh supply of coal is drawn from each or either receptacle into the grate simply by the use of an ordinary poker or other suitable fire-iron. At the same time the coal in the receptacles keeps falling by its own weight ready to be drawn into the grate as before described when wanted.
>
> In consequence of the coal acquiring a preparatory high temperature and also in consequence of its being drawn into contact with the ignited fuel laterally instead of on top of the fire, the gases evolved are not wasted as smoke but converted into and usefully consumed as flame.

Crestadoro was quite right: warmed up coal burns well, and presumably the gases are absorbed in the process. I lived in a terraced house, similar in structure to the terraces of Rumford Street where Crestadoro wrote this patent. A multi-fuelled stove was the main source of our heat, baking the whole chimney in winter and so keeping most of the air warm. Thick velvet curtains, draught-excluders, heavily filled book cases, pictures and dust catching clutter to keep it all cosy, meant that our house would probably have looked quite familiar to Crestadoro. So the Crestadoro method certainly would work but the main problem would be lifting up the coal. Standing on stools, chairs or steps to heave coal into the receptacles would have been a demanding operation. Another hazard that Crestadoro may not have been aware of is how the heat can spilt the stone lintel, often part of the fireplace construction. Accumulated soot and ashes in the recesses of our chimney breast set on fire one night ,and cracked the massive stone.

How far builders would have been interested in putting the non standard receptacles into new houses is another question.

These queries aside, it does look as if Crestadoro had developed a potentially practical and useful improvement, and the certainty with which he writes suggests he actually had one constructed. No. 21 Rumford Street has long since vanished (the whole street was demolished in the late 1950s and what is left is part of the University of Manchester campus) so there is nothing to investigate there. But the detail convinces: this could only be written by someone who knew his fires:

> In place of an ordinary poker I prefer using a 'feeder' constructed similarly to an ordinary poker, except that it is flattened at the end like a chisel. The flat part may be of any convenient width, but in practice I find that a breadth of about one inch and a half and a length of nine inches answers best for using the 'feeder' either from the top of the grate or through the front bars.

(Incidentally there are many streets and roads called Rumford in Britain : a tribute to Count Rumford, soldier of fortune, physicist, re-organiser of Bavaria, and inventor amongst other things of the kitchen range, coffee percolator and the sensational Rumford fireplace. By restricting the chimney opening and empowering the up draught, Rumford transformed domestic heating

throughout Britain, hence the ubiquitousness of the street names. Crestadoro must have been pleased to be living on Rumford Street as he mused on more efficient ways of burning fuel.)

This is the last but one of Crestadoro's patents and it is admirable to find the ageing Crestadoro still enthralled with fire, smoke and combustion, and for once producing an idea that has no precedents in ancient natural philosophy. But like so many others, he may owe something though to the ideas developed by Benjamin Franklin in his *Letter on Smoky Chimneys*[189] and his Franklin stove, which he would not patent but gave freely to others to develop for general benefit.

Developing the fire grate must have kept Crestadoro happily involved in the company of engineers, the stimulation of their workshops and technical debates. In turn, they appreciated the links with their Chief Librarian, not a remote bookman but one who got his hands dirty in wrestling with the possibilities of oil, steam, fuel, machinery and power.

## Exhibition of Appliances for the Economical Consumption of Fuel

Crestadoro was a member of the Manchester Society for the Promotion of Scientific Industry and was active in one of their enterprises, the Exhibition of Appliances for the Economical Consumption of Fuel, held on the 30 January 1874 at Peel Park, Salford. An advance description in the *Birmingham Daily Post* of 20 January 1874, details eight classes, and hints at over ambitious plans: 'The Council of the Society set out with a very comprehensive programme, including every conceivable branch of the question how economy of consumption may be accrued, but experience has obliged them in some respects to curtail the original design.'

The exhibition was on a magnificent scale:

> About 500 appliances of the different classes will be displayed in a wooden building 200ft by 50ft, with three annexes for large exhibitors. The catalogue will include some of the smallest and simplest contrivances, as well as ponderous boilers and engines, with all the latest improvements that have been devised under the stimulus of increasing cost of fuel.

Brickwork was provided for the fire-grates in the exhibition and steam power for whoever needed it. The exhibition catalogue is splendid,[190] rich in sketches, diagrams and textual explanations. Even the wood and glass construction, exterior and interior is described. The interior was simple, painted light blue, chocolate with a stretching dado of grey cloth for the numerous drawings. The rooms for ladies, staff, Society members and exhibitors were more richly decorated: 'by Messrs. Pavy Pretto & Co., of Hamsel Street, Falcon Square, London, the material used being their patent felted fabric, the ladies' room is in light blue, the exhibitors room in red, and the large office in the French style.' John Plant, librarian and curator of Peel Park Museum was thanked for his support during the construction in Peel Park.

## Exhibits

Crestadoro's entries are in Class Seven for domestic fires and stoves: number 279, the 'Patent lateral-feeding stock holding grate' is described in detail with a note at the end:

> The appliance may be adapted to existing grates, stoves, furnaces and other fire-places. Fire-grates of all sizes and description constructed on the patent lateral-feeding, stock-holding principle maybe had of Mr. H. Luke, Ironmonger, 163 Deansgate, Manchester, from whom estimates may also be obtained for adapting the new appliance to existing fire-places.

This suggests that Crestadoro was hoping for some monetary return for his appliance; presumably

Fig.14 Fuel Exhibition

he had entered into some sort of agreement with Mr. H. Luke. Exhibit Number 280 is simply listed as 'One Poker' Professor A. Crestadoro'. Protection for the unpatented exhibits was covered by the exhibition being licensed as an International Exhibition by the Board of Trade. A long extract from the Protection of Inventions Act 1870 is included in the catalogue. The period of time granted for the exhibition was from 30 January to 21 March 1874.

The spirit of the venture was in drawing public attention to what has been done and might be further explored, somewhat like the alternative energy directions of the twenty first century. There seems to be an inclusive spirit, ranging from praise for the excellent artificial fuel invented and patented by a lady, to admiration for an old captain of the Royal Navy for his design of three furnaces, still trying to help his country after fifty years of professional life. There were four-horse agricultural engines from Young Brothers of Liverpool, furnaces from Prague, a globe pressure boiler from Huddersfield, a tubular boiler from Leith, and a 60-horse Rood's boiler by the Patent Boiler Company of Birmingham. There were mechanical stokers, fuel economisers for locomotives, machines for cutting coal and making peat and a ventilating drain from a Mr. Stott of Halifax which is described in detail. The variety of inventions, drawings, models and appliances was emphasised in the accounts and the *Birmingham Daily Post* gives specific mention to Manchester's enterprising librarian:

> The domestic department is well represented, and there is every imaginable contrivance for effecting a saving in the consumption of household coal. Dr. Crestadoro, the chief librarian of the Manchester Free Library, exhibits an ingenious self-feeding grate.

## Spectators

The Crystal Palace Exhibition was supposed to have promoted an egalitarian spirit, with relief being expressed at the good behaviour of the working classes who thronged there. (Although careful admission pricing was used to keep some division between the classes.) It might be expected that an exhibition of boilers, fuel, grates, of real fire, flame and smoke would be a place where men could stroll about happily in working clothes but not so.

Towards the end of the exhibition several newspapers caught up the theme of a group of 'extraordinary visitors'. The *Pall Mall Gazette* was fascinated:

> A profound sensation was caused at the fashionable gathering at the Peel Park Exhibition at Manchester Wednesday by the spectacle of four labouring men, dressed in coarse woollen coats and fustian trousers tied up at the knees after the fashion of navvies, sauntering among the throng of smartly dressed people who were inspecting the machinery. As the price of admission was half-a-crown, it was considered incredible that these strange visitors could have legitimately obtained entrance into the building, and accordingly they were officially requested to explain "how they came there." This question was met by indignant retort from one of them that " he had paid his brass and treated his three mates, and he supposed he had as much right to be there as any one else."[191]

The titles of these newspaper articles, from *Incident at an Exhibition*, *Wealthy Navvies*, *As Much Right To Be There as Anyone Else!* to *Fustian to the Fore, Strange Visitors to a Fashionable Show*, form a curious comment on the social mores and ridiculous snobbery of the times.

## Society Member

On 11 August 1874, a representative of the Society for the Promotion of Scientific Industry (the signature is illegible) wrote to Andrea Crestadoro, the Chief Librarian, as follows:

> I have the pleasure to send you by direction of the council a catalogue of the last Exhibition of Appliances for the Economical Consumption of Fuel with the hope that it may be considered a pleasant memento of the Society's first exhibition in which you were an Exhibitor[192]

The *Manchester Times* of 6 March 1875, recorded a meeting of the Society where a paper on Patent Laws was presented by Mr. W. Lloyd Wise and followed by extensive discussion: Professor Crestadoro was listed amongst the participants. Although Crestadoro was a member of many learned societies it was often a representational role through his civic position. The Society for the Promotion of Scientific Industry is clearly one where he was active and happy: smoke, inventions, patent laws, boilers, locomotives and improvements were his pleasures and presumably he stayed a member for life.

Like the artist Adolph Valette, as depicted by the poet, John Ward, Crestadoro found inspiration in the smoke choked skies of Manchester, trying to make an improvement for the citizens who had given him a home:

> Mersey flats moored under Bailey Bridge,
> smoke dissolving railway arches at blue dusk,
> the mystery of fog on still canals.[193]

## Dr. Crestadoro's Poker

Crestadoro's contribution to librarianship was largely forgotten as the new generations of professionals succeeded him, but somewhere along the line he was fondly remembered in Manchester and a precious relic preserved.

The writer of the Miscellany column in the *Manchester Guardian* of 17 July 1934, prompted by the opening of the landmark Manchester Central Library, resurrected a memory of Crestadoro. Here at last is a fitting and affectionate tribute to the old Chief Librarian:

> Dr. Crestadoro's Poker
>
> Now that the Manchester Public Library is housed in an all-electric building a useful article which had for two generations held an honoured place near the open fire in the chief librarian's room has been relegated to a Branch library where coal is still in use.
>
> It was known to the staff as 'Dr. Crestadoro's Poker'. Dr. Crestadoro was a former chief librarian, who, besides being a great bibliographer, was of a mechanical turn of mind and the inventor of many contrivances, none of which, however, was commercially successful. One of his inventions was an improvement in the construction of domestic and other fire-grates, by which he hoped to lessen the smoke nuisance. Its main aim was the feeding of the fire with coal from the sides of the grate instead of at the top. Part of the apparatus was what the inventor called a 'feeder'- merely an ordinary poker with the end flattened out like a chisel. The library poker was his working model of the 'feeder', and it was as good as new after being in use for sixty years.

The poker sounds reminiscent of the one Benjamin Franklin recommended for use with a stove: 'A light poker about the same length, with a flat broad point,'[194]

In the Manchester Archives there is a photograph of the Old Staff Room on the first floor of Hulme Library taken in1950 by the city surveyor, prior to demolition.[195] Hulme was the last Branch library in Manchester to have coal, and this must be the famous poker, propped up between the range and the stove.

Fig.15 Crestadoro's Poker

[160] 'Dr. Crestadoro's Poker', *Manchester Guardian* (17 July 1934)

[161] Axon, 'Andrea Crestadoro', *DNB*

[162] Christine MacLeod, Jennifer Tann, James Andrew, Jeremy Stein, 'Evaluating inventive activity: the cost of nineteenth - century UK patents and the fallibility of renewal data', *Economic History Review*, 56:6 (2003), pp.545-546

[163] Samuel Smiles, *Self Help; with Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (London, 1859)

[164] www.oxforddnb.com

[165] MA, Letter 69/28

[166] Samuel Smiles, *Lives of the Engineers, with an account of their principal works : comprising also a history of inland communication in Britain* (London: Murray, 1861-2), p.74

[167] Samuel Smiles, *The Life of George Stephenson, Railway Engineer* (London: Murray, 5th ed. 1858) p.483

[168] Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, (London: Blackwell, 2003) p.242

[169] Joseph Baretti, *A Journey from London to Genoa through England, Portugal, Spain and Fran*ce (Fontwell: Centaur, 1970 fac. Edition) Vol.1, p.35

[170] Baretti, *A Journey from London to Genoa*, p.199

[171] Baretti, *A Journey from London to Genoa*, p.199

[172] 'Italiano', 'Italians in Manchester', *Manchester Guardian* (15 October 1927), p. 20

[173] G. Weightman, *The Industrial Revolutionaries*, p. 101

[174] 'A New propeller for steamers', *Scientific American*, 8 (4 Dec 1852) p. 94

[175] John Timbs, *A Year-book of Facts in Science and Art* (London: Bogue, 1853) p.33

[176] 'British Extracts: A new propeller', *The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* (10 August 1853) p. 8

[177] www.inventionware.com/biography-of-antonio-meucci

[178] Pardoe Woodman and Estelle Stead, *The Blue Island: Experiences of a New Arrival Beyond the Veil* (London: Hutchinson, 1922)

[179] Stephen Hanger, e-mail to author, 23 November 2009

[180] MA, Letter 50/73

[181] 'Mr. Jackson's door hinges', *Monthly Magazine,* 3:13 (January 1797) p. 145

[182] Luke Herbert, *The Engineer's and Mechanic's Encylopaedia* (London: Kelly, 1836) Volume 1, p. 573

[183] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p. 63

[184] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.103

[185] Goffin, *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, p.204

[186] John Rylands Library, Deansgate, Manchester, Axon papers no.39, letter from Andrea Crestadoro to W. E. A. Axon, 10 July 1868

[187] Historical Timeline – Alternative Energy – ProCon.org

[188] Stephen Mosley, *The Chimney of the World; A History of Smoke Pollution in Victorian and Edwardian Manchester*, (Cambridge: White Horse Press, 2001)

*[189]* Benjamin Franklin, *Observations on the Causes and Cures of Smoky Chimneys. In a Letter Dr. Ingen-Housz, Physician to the Emperor, at Vienna* (Philadelphia printed. London reprinted, 1787)

[190] Society for the Promotion of Scientific Industry, *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Appliances for the Economic Consumption of Fuel, Peel Park, 1874* (Manchester, 1874)

[191] 'A Profound Sensation', *Pall Mall Gazette*, (21 February 1874)

[192] MA, Letter 45/74

[193] John Ward, *Selected Poems 1968 – 1995* (Tarantula, 1996) p.62

[194] Benjamin Franklin, William Temple Franklin, *Memoirs of Benjamin Franklin* (Philadelphia: McCarty, 1840) Volume 2 p.416

[195] MA, photograph M52120, 18 October 1950

# Chapter Eight: The Glider and the Empty Room

> He was particularly interested in aerial locomotion; in fact, it was said recently by a member of his staff that when he died a partly constructed aeroplane (perhaps we should say glider) was found in an empty room that Crestadoro used at one of the libraries.[196]

## A Great Passion

The history of human flight is one of ingenious and sometimes disastrous application of wild theories, of incredible contraptions, extreme incidents, daring characters, art and poetry, packed with the entrancing stories of kites, wings, balloons, airships, gliders and aeroplanes, and aspiring aeronauts. Books on the subject tend to be long.

It helps as a starting point to bear in mind the two fundamental models of flight.

There are basically only two ways of flying: floating, as in the lighter-than-air model, or flapping as in the heavier-than-air model. Lighter than air is manifest in the balloon, air ship, glider, and heavier than air in mechanised flight. People have travelled through the air in balloons since 1783 and in powered flying machines since 1903. But the origins of all these go back at least to the middle ages.

It was inevitable that a visionary and inventor like Crestadoro would be drawn in. As one historian noted: ‘His great passion, however, was for aeronautics and he exhibited a novel model balloon in 1868.’[197]

## Multitudes of Balloons

Crestadoro’s life elided with the evolution of balloons, gliders and prototype aeroplanes. Perhaps he

even saw balloons as a child. In 1812 Sophie Blanchard, the famous French balloonist, flew over Turin.

From the start of modern ballooning, the ascent in Paris in November 1783, Balloonmania took a grip. Scientists, military engineers and geographers struggled to persuade that ballooning was more than popular entertainment whilst succumbing themselves to the romance. On 1 December 1783, scientists went up in the first ascent of a hydrogen balloon, much more controllable than the Montgolfier monsters. Science was festooned with carnival: the balloon was 'glorious pink-and-yellow, candy-coloured', draped with flags and the basket filled with bottles of champagne as well as scientific instruments. The Paris crowd numbered around 400,000.

The English scientific establishment in the body of the Royal Society was ambivalent about ballooning and certainly did not sponsor developments in the early years, sneering at the French for mistaking novelty for science. Instead they put their money on astronomy and giant telescopes, keeping a watching brief on this 'new Art of Flying' through observers in Paris such as Benjamin Franklin.[198] It was the owners of the pleasure gardens who sponsored the development of balloons.

The professional aeronauts were perforce pioneers of marketing, with subscription deals and spin offs, making good use of the new commercially orientated periodicals and newspapers. If the scientific establishment turned its nose up: 'Ye Men of Science! How you stood aloof!',[199] the great public was, as ever, eager to pay for novelty and the wonder of these sublime chariots.

Crestadoro would have had plenty of opportunity to view balloon ascents in England from his first arrival in 1849. In 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, the daredevil and accident-prone aeronauts, Mr. and Mrs. Graham, ascended from the Hippodrome in very strong winds, skimmed the glass roof of the Crystal Palace, missed landing in Hyde Park, damaged several buildings with the grapnel and were finally rescued by the police from the chimneys of Park Place. In 1852, Crestadoro lived at Five Harleyford Road on the corner of the entrance to the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens: a prime spot for balloon spotting. Charles Green, the celebrated balloonist from the City of London had shrewdly negotiated a contract with the Vauxhall proprietors to supply balloon events: 'For the next twenty years Vauxhall became associated with spectacular balloon 1aunches, and various balloon dramas, until it was finally closed in 1859.'[200]

## Manchester's Balloons

Manchester took to Balloonmania from the start.

Multitudes of miniature balloons had flown around Paris until they were banned as a hazard after setting houses alight. In 1784, the year of the first ascent in England by Vincenzo Lunardi from Woolwich, Manchester too banned the sport:

> However, if no Mancunian had found satisfactory means of getting himself off the ground, some attention had been given to less responsible pastimes and by the 29th October, 1784 the release of 'lighted balloons' had 'become so frequent and alarming to the inhabitants' – and no doubt prejudicial to their crops and wooden buildings – that the Boroughreeve and Constables felt it necessary to publish notices prohibiting them along with 'squibs, crackers and rockets'. lighted balloons' along with 'squibs, crackers and rockets.'[201]

Manchester has a fine history of balloon ascents. Balloon Street in the city centre commemorates the city's first ascent with a plaque where James Sadler went up in a hydrogen balloon on 12 May 1785. There was also a contemporary broadside. His son later died in 1824 on an ascent from Bolton, colliding with a factory chimney near Blackburn.

Balloon ascents became popular features of fairs, galas and celebrations in Manchester and surrounding towns. Three pleasure gardens, Vauxhall, Belle Vue and Pomona, provided venues in Manchester, and in surrounding towns the spots selected were linked to the proximity of gas supply. Famous aeronauts such as George and Charles Green, Henry Coxwell, Mrs. Graham (who sued Pomona for the poor quality of coal gas) and the picaresque Lieutenant Gale, included Manchester on their circuits.

Resident in Salford in 1851 and 1852, and a decade later in Manchester, Crestadoro would have had plenty of opportunity to view Manchester balloons. He may well have witnessed the first ascent from Belle Vue on 2 June 1852 that ended in tragedy. Guiseppi Lunardini (in reality Arthur Goulston) could not make the booking and his father James Goulston carried it out instead, dying horribly on landing in a storm on Stonebreaks Hill when he became tangled in the rigging.

There are colourful tales but the main message is that ballooning is not an easily controlled pursuit. As well as the vagaries of the weather, the quality of the gas, there are the odd misfortunes that befall those who upset the mob, easily done, it would appear, in Victorian England. Especially if the balloon landed in notorious territories like Manchester's Ancoats, bearing a name that was political dynamite:

> the final aeronaut to rise from Pomona Gardens was William Henry Adams who took off on three occasions in July and August 1865. The balloon bore the name Garibaldi and, whilst his first two descents at Middleton and Sale Moor appear to have been uneventful, Adams had the misfortune to land at Ancoats after his last ascent and to have the balloon badly damaged by a mob of Irishmen who took exception to its name.[202]

What would Crestadoro's reaction have been to this strange conflux of ballooning and the politics of Italian papal power?

## Manchester's Aviation Chronicler

The late Brian R. Robinson's book *Aviation in Manchester* was published in 1977 by the local branch of the Royal Aeronautical Society (RAS). He gave a comprehensive and colourful account, as much about the people as their machines. The details of the ascents, the aeronauts and their eventual fates are fascinating, and the differences pointed out for Lancashire illuminate the history of ballooning as a whole.

For example, the use of balloons in the siege of Paris in the Franco-Prussian War is well documented but only in Robinson's book have I found an account of the innovation being linked to George Robinson of the *Manchester Guardian*.

> In July 1870 the Franco-Prussian War broke out and the City of Metz was soon besieged. The only British War Correspondent in the city was George Robinson of the Manchester Guardian and, faced with the apparently total absence of ways of sending his despatches, Robinson hit upon the idea of making small fabric balloons, filling them with coal gas and releasing them to drift on the wind over the Prussian lines carrying messages for onward transmission by the finders. He also wrote messages on the sides of his balloons and, although many were lost, the Guardian eventually received some of his reports.[203]

Brian R. Robinson did not forget Dr. Crestadoro, and his inclusion of Crestadoro as a Mancunian would surely have warmed the heart of one who had such pride in being a naturalised citizen there :

> Virtually all the aeronauts who ascended from Manchester came to the area from other parts of the country and there do not appear to be any records of any Mancunian balloonists in those early days. However, at least one man in Manchester did direct his attention to improving the science and safety of aerostation. Dr. A. Crestadoro, who was Chief Librarian of the Manchester Free Library and a member of the Aeronautical Society, published a pamphlet on Air Locomotion and in 1868 took out a patent relating to a balloon which was described as 'the only fire balloon which seems free from the danger of conflagration.' A model of his metallic balloon was exhibited at the Society's Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in the same year.[204]

## Crestadoro's Balloons

Given the richness of invention, imagination and eccentricity that characterized aeronautics, it is remarkable that Crestadoro still managed to devise something unique with his metallic balloons. He is surely the source for the mythical man who invented the lead balloon.

It is typical of Crestadoro that his invention fits neither with ballooning nor the new sphere of mechanised flight, promoted tentatively at the first Aeronautical Exhibition in 1868 where he presented his model. Like the Impulsoria at Nine Elms, his machine was out of step with both time and place. Like the Impulsoria too, Crestadoro's design reverted to the past. His invention both exasperates and charms. In 1869 Robert Smiles admired his ingenuity but regretted the lack of reward:

> Have you ever done anything more in the direction of aeronautics? I wish you could at length turn your studies and expenditure to practical account.The science or the application of science in this direction is attracting deservedly an increased degree of public interest and attention.[205]

Crestadoro did move on from balloons; with his glider he was at the cutting edge of aeronautics, but no more is known of his design and model than the quotation at the start of this chapter.

## Evolution of Aeronautics

On November 20 1783 humans, for the first time ever, flew up free of the earth. Pilatre de Rozier and Francois Laurent, the Marquis d'Arlandes, ascended in a gorgeous blue and gold Montgolfier balloon, with nothing but damp sponges to extinguish the little fires that sparked up from the burning brazier. The world's first flight lasted twenty-five minutes, and carried the aeronauts 9,000 yards across Paris.

The great Dr Johnson astutely identified that the limitation of balloons was the inability to navigate. This prevented balloons from becoming the means of transport that had optimistically been forecast, and whilst providing scientific data for other disciplines remained largely as 'beautiful, expensive and dangerous toys'.[206] (A sweet memory of the Doctor is that he bequeathed his barometer to the first English aeronaut, James Sadler, who had disastrously lost his own instruments.)[207]

The balloonists tried all manner of inventions to direct their balloons, using variously oars, flappers, bellows, moulinets, wings and propellers. None of these made any difference: the skilled balloonist could juggle with ballast, guide ropes and adjustment of valves to make best use of the air currents, but really it was all a gamble.

Technology moved on from balloons to engine driven airships. The first attempt dates back to

Henry Giffard in 1852 with steam power, but the risk of fire and the cumbersome manoeuvres meant that airships really only evolved with the gasoline engine at the turn of the century.

Whilst balloons filled the skies with static (lighter than air) flight, a few enthusiasts for heavier-than-air flight pursued their ideas.

In the quiet Yorkshire village of Brompton by Sawdon, near Scarborough, the young George Cayley in 1799 scribbled his design for inclined lift, bringing into reality the revolutionary theory proposed by Benjamin Robbins in 1746, that if a stream of air hit an inclined plane it would rise. Cayley had, for the first time, identified the forces of flight and designed a fixed-wing machine with separate systems for lift, propulsion and control. Now a treasure of the Science Museum, London, the little silver disc on which Cayley sketched the first aeroplane was only salvaged from broken scraps by a sharp-eyed Scarborough jeweller in 1925: 'This small coin documented both the scientific principle for and the practical application of heavier-than-air aviation fully a hundred tears before the Wright brothers' historic flights at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.'[208]

Cayley's ideas were largely forgotten after his death in 1857: his family 'tried to forget about Sir George's rather embarrassing "aerial crochets"'.[209] At least his daredevil grandson, George John Cayley, who alone of the family shared his obsession, cheered his last years.

The foundation of the Aeronautical Society (AS), renamed in 1918 as the Royal Aeronautical Society, and their first exhibiton in 1868, marked a turning point in resurrecting heavier-than-air notions, although their efforts initially met with incomprehension and ridicule.

The quest for the heavier-than-air machine persisted. Key inventors returned to the tradition of winged flight, constructing gliders and other contraptions. There were different schools of thought, thousands of theories and a general frustration that the answer was still elusive. Some were of the flapping wings school, frantically trying to create human birds with their ornithopters, while others concentrated on the fixed wings of propulsion. There were even machines, a by-product of research, that, as early as 1904, drew in the crowds by giving them the illusion of flying. Hiram Maxim's Captive Flying Machine, the only one in the world to survive, still features as the oldest ride on Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

In 1889, Otto Lilienthal, the German pioneer of aviation, known as The Glider King, famously dismissed the balloon as 'eine falsche Bahn', a blind alley, and 'lamented that for so long attention had been distracted by aerostats from the real problems of aviation'.[210]

The balance shifted. The Wright brothers experimented with flying their gliders like kites, with a pilot aboard, and then came the significant moment when they replaced the kite string with the motor-driven propeller: 'Eilmer of Malmesbury's tradition of experiment with heavier-than-air devices was vindicated on 17 December 1903 at Kitty Hawk.'[211]

Crestadoro with his metallic balloons and his construction of a glider, echoes all these phases, and being Crestadoro he also links back to the past.

## The Aeronautical Society of Great Britain

Aeronautics as a science went into the doldrums after the Napoleonic wars, only reviving as scientists rediscovered the potential for exploration and experiment. When James Glaisher, like John Jeffries before him, tried to make ballooning scientific he brought in a change in direction and created new opportunities for the inventor and aeronaut. Notions of mechanised flight crept back in. Two of Smiles' heroes, the prime movers in British engineering, Sir William Fairbairn and James

Nasmyth, funded Glaisher's ascents and he also won sponsorship from the British Association.[212] This was evidence of serious and perceptive commitment.

The AS came into being on 12 January 1866 at an illustrious birthplace, the Campden Hill home of the Duke of Argyll. The event was widely reported in newspapers, Manchester stressing that one member of the Council, William Fairbairn, was of their city. The *Morning Post* of 16 January, gave James Glaisher's forceful speech in full. Glaisher itemised the sad state of aeronautical affairs, from the low status of ballooning as a public display to the lack of knowledge of air currents, aerial navigation and the principles of flight.

The AS was realistically cautious and self-deprecating, conscious that aeronautics was not considered a serious science, a stance influenced by the Royal Society. In the newspaper reports of the 1867 AS meeting (at which a paper was read from a Mr. Artingstall of Manchester, of whom more later), the chair was quoted as admitting that: 'the study could hardly be said to have arrived at the stage of infancy – it was still an embryo.'

The members of the AS did not hide from their difficulties or failures as Frank H. Smith, the RAS librarian, described in a 1960 journal: 'One thing that strikes the reader of these early papers to the Society is the fact that speakers did not mince their words. They did not actually call each other mountebanks and fools and false claimants, but there can be little doubt that the implication was there...'[213]

The AS had a difficult start, trying to establish the worth of a science that had as yet no technical feasibility for heavier-than-air flight. But they were making gradual advances that retrospectively proved critical in aeronautical development:

The AS was still struggling to establish itself when, towards the end of the nineteenth century, Major B. F. S. Baden-Powell became secretary, revived the flagging interest, reversed the decline in membership and established a quarterly journal. The AS was in a strong position to take forward the new era of aeronautical science, which ceased from being a Cinderella as the Kitty Hawk took to the skies in December 1903.

## The First Aeronautical Exhibition

Two years after its foundation, with F. H. Wenham as the moving spirit, the Aeronautical Society manifested itself publicly with the first ever Aeronautical Exhibition. The exhibition was held at the Crystal Palace, ran for nine days from 25 June 1868, and can also be claimed as the first aeronautical conference, as there was an accompanying series of evening lectures: 'On the evening of Monday, the 29th inst., Wednesday, the 1st July and Friday, the 3rd, meetings will beheld at the Society of Arts for the reading of papers and discussion, as to the merits of the various objects exhibited.'[214]

So, in June 1868, Crestadoro was again an exhibitor at the Crystal Palace, now in its venue at Sydenham, and, like the Impulsoria, his metallic balloon model served to entertain but not to have any useful outcome. However, he was in good company for other exhibitors came in for real ridicule. The significance of their first attempts at mechanical flight was not generally appreciated.

The newspapers had given the exhibition some good advance publicity with lists of the eight classes and explanations of the competitions and prizes. There was little understanding of the critical edge that all this represented and more enthusiasm for the promised displays of captive balloons and free aerial excursions. This cannot have pleased James Glaisher:

AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY'S EXHIBITION. The proposition to hold an exhibition in London, of objects of an aeronautical character, having met with encouragement, the Council of the Aeronautical Society have determined to act upon the proposition, with the hope that the guarantee and prize fund will be materially increased. The objects hitherto announced by members for exhibition promise interesting features for the engineer and mechanic, and there will not be wanting experiments of practical character, which can scarcely fail to interest the general public. The objects are classified as:— 1. Light engines and machinery. 2. Complete working aerial apparatus. 3. Models. 4. Ditto—working. 5. Plans and illustrative drawings. 6. Separate articles connected with aeronautics, including objects of interest illustrative and commemorative of previous experiments. 7. Kites and other similar apparatus proposed to be used in cases of shipwreck, traction, or in the attainment of other useful ends. 8. Painting and drawing of cloud scenery and landscape as seen from a balloon. The exhibition will be opened on Thursday, the 25th of June, at the Crystal Palace. There will be no charge for space. Each exhibited article must accompanied by large card or placard in duplicate, having conspicuously printed its name and object. Arrangements have been made, by order of the Treasury, for facilitating the passing of goods intended for the aeronautical exhibition, through the Custom-house, upon the production of a document specifying the mark, number, and contents of each package. It would be advisable that all packages should be shipped direct to London, where practicable. Goods will be received at the Crystal Palace until the 20th of June, unless the term is prolonged by special arrangement. It may be observed that there is no duty upon philosophical instruments or machinery of any kind. The fund out of which Prizes will be apportioned has not attained that amount which will allow of complete specification; but the Council are gratified in being able to state that the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society have devoted £50 a prize for " The best form of kite or other aerial arrangement, or modification thereof, for establishing communication from a wreck on shore, or between two vessels at sea." The Crystal Palace Company have also declared their intention of giving a prize of £50 to the exhibitor of a machine to carry and worked by steam engine or other motive power, which shall sustain and move itself in the air, at a height of not less than ten feet from the ground, for a period of not less than twenty minutes. The Duke of Sutherland offers a prize of £100 to the inventor of a machine which, not being of the nature of a kite or balloon, shall ascend with man to the height of 120 feet. The Aeronautical Society offers a prize of £55, aided by the contributions of several members, to the exhibitor of the lightest engine in proportion to its power, from whatever source the power may be derived. Smaller prizes, far as the guarantee fund will allow, will be given to exhibitors of other machines, according to merit. During the exhibition, daily experiments and partial ascents will made in captive balloon, upon the plan lately pursued in Paris by Mons. Giffard. This gentleman's experiments, confined to an altitude 1,000 feet, were greatly appreciated by the higher classes, who crowded to take the opportunity to ascend to that height. Messrs. Domango and Delamarne's 44 Ballon Captif has been engaged for this purpose, under the management of Mons. Delamarne, who will inflate it with gas especially manufactured under his superintendence; and it is proposed to make successive ascents to at least 1,000 feet. The car of this aerostat is three yards square, and will accommodate fourteen persons. Mr. Glaisher will largely avail himself of the opportunity here afforded for meteorological experiments during the captive ascents both by day and night. During the latter, the power of the magnesium lamp will be tested, both

> as to the distance from which it can be seen at different elevations, and its own powers of illumination. Similar experiments, not confined to the magnesium light, will be conducted. Balloons for free ascents it is hoped will also be held in readiness, under the guidance of experienced aeronauts, for the accommodation of visitors, who may engage to make an aerial excursion. During the nine days that the exhibition remains open under the auspices of the Society, arrangements will be made for evening meetings of members and their friends, for explanation and discussion relative to the merits of the various objects exhibited. It is believed that those gentlemen who are to be appointed adjudicators of the prizes will receive much assistance from these discussions. Throughout this period members of the Society will be admitted to the exhibition without payment. For further particulars application should be made to the Hon. Sec., Mr. Fred. W. Brearey, Maidenstone-hill, Blackheath.[215]

## Newspaper Reports

After the event, the newspaper reports were contemptuous, concentrating on the failure of the entertainments rather than realising that amongst the oddities were the designs for future flight. Model No. 28 by someone with the resoundingly adventurous name of W.

Quartermaine, reminiscent of Rider Haggard's hero, was presciently named 'The Chrysalis'. The revered balloonist, Henry Coxwell, angrily denounced both the exhibits and the members in *The Times*: this must have been particularly hurtful to the AS:

> there were all the old familiar toys and plans which years and years back I had seen and shaken my head at; there were fans and modifications of screws, of clockwork springs, and planes, both inclined and at a low pitch and very high pitch; there were heads, tails, arms, wings, feathers, and other appurtenances, but nothing that would even flutter, and as to flying, unless some wire or rope held them up, why this, the great expectation, was never realized….
>
> I am strongly of opinion [sic] that these recent performances would hardly have passed muster at the end of the last century, they are certainly not in keeping with the intelligence of the present generation.[216]

Thus several newspapers reported the destruction of M. Delamarne's balloon, usually with the added sneer that this was really the best attraction at the Aeronautical Exhibition:

> The Aeronautical Society's exhibition at the Crystal Palace, which is a decided failure in itself, suffered further on Saturday afternoon by the total destruction of the balloon Captif, brought over from France to enable timid Englishmen to ascend to a height of 1,000 feet, and be held by a rope at that altitude, for the payment of a guinea. It was an immense balloon, with a canvas covering, and a car that would seat 13 or 14 persons. It was constructed on the old Montgolfier principle, and was inflated by means of gas from petroleum. It should have ascended on Thursday and Friday, but owing to a hitch in the steam engine employed to coil and uncoil the rope, did not. On Saturday afternoon, however, inflation was complete, and preparations were made for an ascent. The breeze turned the balloon over too far, the fire beneath caught the canvas, and in less than five minutes the unfortunate proprietor, Mons. Delamarne, was wringing his hands over the total loss of his property. The sight of the balloon twisting about-a huge ball of fire-was very grand while it lasted. Much commiseration was felt for its owner, who will have to

bear the entire loss. Mr. Coxwell, the celebrated aeronaut, seeing that the people around were inclined to be merry rather than sympathetic, although he was present as a mere visitor, leaped upon a chair, made a speech, urging the claims the hapless foreigner had upon the spectators, and commenced a subscription on the spot. The Duke of Sutherland and others took the matter up, and the secretary to the Aeronautical Society speedily issued placards inviting aid.[217]

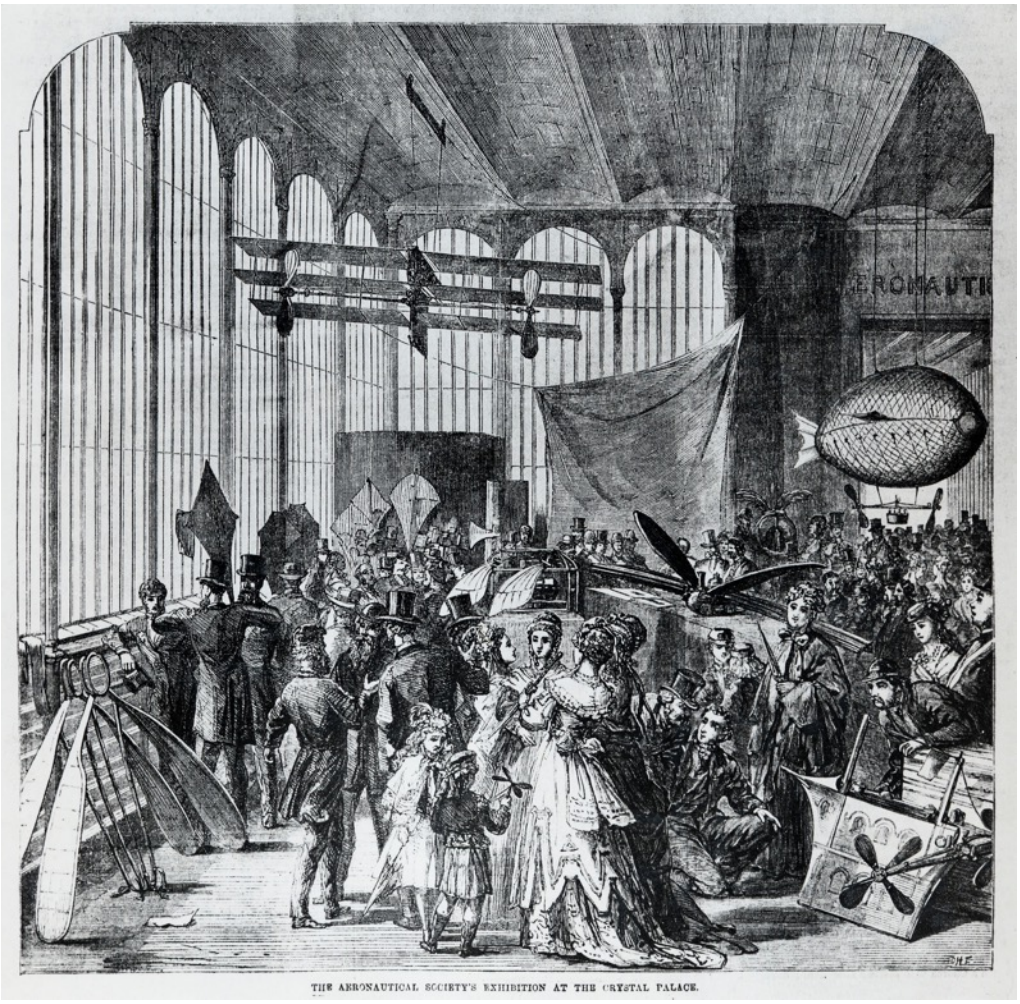



Fig.16 Aeronautical Exhibition

## Official Report

The official report is charmingly honest and modest: the writer explains that the whole aim of the exhibition is to give an opportunity for the various theories 'in some instances widely at variance with each other' to be tested and debated in the hope that some consensus might emerge and cause 'inventors to work more in unison, and direct their labours in a channel most likely to lead to a successful result.'

The problems of mounting the Exhibition are listed in a patient way in the official report: lack of funding, intended exhibits needing more funds than were available for completion, insufficient resource for publicity despite the 'unwearied exertions of the Hon. Secretary', with many inventors not having sufficient notice to send in all their 'interesting models'. But more than that was the acknowledgement both of the tenuous position of aeronautics and the rather unpredictable nature of its enthusiasts:

> In taking this step for inviting public scrutiny, the Society was prepared to expect some of the ridicule that has ever been attached to this subject, by those that are apt to mistake sarcasm for sound argument, but this cannot influence the success or failure of a particular question in science, involving intricate mechanical principles, generally beyond the comprehension of those who adopt this style in discussion, and which consequently seldom meets with a reply.
>
> The Society, as a body, holds to the integrity of purpose expressed at its formation, of giving forth no opinion concerning the well-intentioned plans and labours of individuals submitted to its notice, however mistaken these ideas may appear to be; and believing that a more comprehensive description of some of the articles exhibited than that contained in the catalogue, may prove both useful and instructive, this report has consequently been drawn out.

Amongst all the various exhibits across the different classes were those that indeed presaged the future: chief amongst them No. 37, John Stringfellow's steam-powered triplane, which apart from not having a vertical tail, is the image of the early aeroplane. It was tested a few times during the exhibition and once left the guide wire and actually flew: 'the elegance and neatness of its construction' was singled out: it was 'the first experiment adopting the proposed system of superposed aeroplanes to a steam flying machine'. The steam engine of Stringfellow's model as No. 4 won first prize. Stringfellow, with his engineering skills developed in the lace and carriage building industries, later planned a flying machine to carry him, but died before realising his ambition. Diagrams and models of Stringfellow's famous triplane have kept its fame alive and one can be found in the Museum of Air and Space in Manchester, on the site of Crestadoro's Campfield Library.

Sadly, there is no model of the intriguing Chrysalis, described as 'showing great ingenuity and industry on the part of the Inventor', with its self-closing chambers and rocket propulsion, though he has 'experienced some difficulty in arranging the proportions of a mixture that shall neither be too fast nor too slow in its rate of combustion.' A case of light the fuse and stand well back!

It would be fascinating to reassemble the exhibition, for surely it represented every idea, however extreme or impractical, that had obsessed the humans who wanted to fly throughout the ages. There were the ancient designs of men trying to transform themselves into birds, down to kites, cardboard models of birds and bats, to wings on a rotating axle that imitated the 'action of a duck's foot in swimming'. Many efforts were now souped up with engines: steam, winding, gaseous, rotary, explosive oil or gas. The report tries to be kind, making no attempt to pretend aeronautics is anything but rudimentary discovery, a refreshingly unpompous approach that denotes real scientific principles. Modestly, the report considers how far the Exhibition has forwarded Aeronautics and concludes:

> No one has yet ventured to give a correct experimental definition of the primary laws and amount of power consumed in the flight of birds; neither, on the other hand, has any tangible evidence been brought forward to show that mechanical flight is an impossibility for man. At the Evening meetings of Members and Exhibitors, held at the Society of Arts during the Exhibition, the accuracy of the very first law of atmospheric resistance against plane surfaces was challenged.

## Burning Balloon

The report bravely confronts the embarrassment of the burning balloon that was to have been the Exhibition's popular feature and in a worthy spirit of inquiry analyses the causes so carelessly touched on by the newspapers. The balloon was inflated by a non-inflammable gas, heavier than coal gas, held secret by the inventor. A mixture of heated air and ammoniacal gas was used by: 'a liquid evaporated by contact with ignited benzoline', and so 'involved all the risk of conflagration to which a Montgolfier is unquestionably liable.' The ammoniacal gas is also prone to condensation and so to rotting the balloon fabric. The report is unenthusiastic, spotting a key weakness: 'the presence of some amount of heat would prevent condensation but whether this heat can be applied with safety is still an open question.'

## Acclaim for Crestadoro

It is not surprising that the narrator of these events turns to another exhibit, and so immortalises Crestadoro and his metallic balloon:

> The only fire balloon that seems free from the risk of conflagration is the metallic form proposed by Dr. Crestadoro, in which the ascensional power is produced by the rarefaction and displacement of the internal air by means of heat: but this balloon requires to be stored away in an expanded state, and is apt to be collapsed during a descent in windy weather.[218]

Crestadoro had tackled one of the most terrible dangers aeronauts faced, the explosions and fires inevitably linked to frail vessels transported by combustion and inflammable gases. Montgolfier balloons with their fire baskets were frequently scorched, though miraculously no actual fatalities occurred. De Rozier and his pilot, Pierre Romain, died in 1785 when their hybrid Montgolfier and hydrogen balloon exploded into fire: the cause is still debated. Ascending at night with lights and fireworks added to the risk. In 1819, poor Madam Blanchard finally crashed to her death whilst delighting the crowds with her bombs of gold and silver rain: her balloon burst into flames at the Tivoli Gardens in Paris. Modern balloons are built for safety but burners and gas can still be lethal: the worst recent accident was the nineteen people who died in a hot air balloon explosion near Luxor in 2013, the cause being a leak from the gas hose.

## Two Patents

Crestadoro's notion of a flying furnace and chimney, which is the basic concept of his air machine, is first manifested in Patent 1786/1862.

1862: *GB1786/1862 Letters Patent to Andrea Crestadoro, of Genoa, in Italy, Professor of Natural Philosophy, but now residing at 19, Great Ormond Street, Queen Square, in the County of Middlesex, for the Invention of "Improvements in Obtaining and Applying Motive Power from Rarefied Air and from Aeriform Fluids." Sealed the 2nd December 1862, and dated the 17th June 1862. Witness William Kent of 45, Radnor Street, Hulme, Manchester. Provisional Specification.*

The patent is pure Crestadoro. It soon inspires in the reader a feeling of sea sickness, with the accumulation of revolving drum, rotary pistons, vanes, air-sucking actions of fire, atmospheric pressure, rarefied air, aeriform fluids, furnace, ash-pit, pipes, series of fire grates, expanding chimney, terminating in a cupola, and analogies to steam ships and paddle wheels. The patent harks back to the propelling vessels of the Impulsoria patent and holds the same idea that is later reutilised in the fire grate patent. Even the most reckless of aeronauts would surely have flinched from the vision of an ascent in the belching fire and smoke of this spinning barrel.

Crestadoro explains at length both the details and the principle and tries his best to convey a picture of his machine. As ever he is ambitious. In applying steam power to balloons and creating a propelling apparatus to give navigational power he is addressing the great issues of early aeronautics that balloons were non-dirigible.

In 1868, presumably inspired by the AS and the news of the forthcoming exhibition, Crestadoro produced a shorter and simpler patent, GB1815/1867.

1868: *GB1815/1867 Aerial Navigation (This Invention received Provisional Protection only) Provisional Specification left by Andrea Crestadoro at the Office of the Commissioners of Patents, with his petition, on the 3rd June 1868. I, Andrea Crestadoro, of No. 19, Rumford Street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, do hereby declare the nature of the said Invention for 'Improvements in the Means and Apparatus for Navigating the Air,' to be as follows: -*

*(This Invention received Provisional Protection only.)*

There is no record why Crestadoro did not complete the process for full protection as he did with his last patent on fire grates in 1873. Perhaps having published a pamphlet in 1868 on the actual model, he felt the patent superfluous. Certainly, this patent is unusually brief and lacks the exuberant and tumbling chaos of its predecessor and Crestadoro gave an uncharacteristically succinct description:

> I provide a hollow air-tight vessel similar, as far as general shape is concerned, to ordinary balloons, but made of metallic sheet or other fire-proof material and having no openings to the external air except through two taps so placed and arranged that they are on a different level, say one near the bottom and the other on or near the top of the balloon, and they can be easily operated upon both jointly and separately at the will of the air captain as means of communication between the internal and external air. To the bottom of this vessel is attached a furnace forming, as it were part and parcel of the balloon, and being so fitted and arranged that the balloon itself is to the furnace as a boiler. On the fire and the chimney or flue is a pipe passing through the interior of the balloon to the top outside for the discharge of the aeriform products of combustion into the atmosphere. The balloon is also provided with suitable propeller or propellers worked by any suitable motive power. Finally a car is attached to the balloon on the ordinary or other suitable plan.

## Pamphlet

Crestadoro was much less restrained in his pamphlet entitled (and proclaimed proudly in a glorious mixture of fonts) *Air Locomotion dispensing with gas and ballast. An explanatory account of the experimental model of a metallic balloon dispensing with gas and ballast exhibited by A. Crestadoro, Ph. D. at the exhibition of, The Aeronautical Society of Great Britain at The Crystal Palace June 1868*. This was printed by Longmans, Green, and Co. in 1868 and cost sixpence.

Presumably it was on sale at the event, and well worth the price as a fascinating record of contemporary ponderings on the 'art and science of aeronautics'. As well as detailing his own air machine concept and the models, Crestadoro explores theories of aeronautics, especially the way birds use air resistance to travel, dismissing the popular misconception of: 'an inexplicable extraordinary power of muscles'.

Even Crestadoro admits the complex nature of aeronautics and more or less refrains from offering simple solutions. He recognises the difficulty of the weight of a propelling engine against the size of the balloon necessary to carry it. Optimistically he cites the recent findings that the currents of

air in the upper regions ‘are more regular than has been supposed’, and if so, as the veteran aeronaut, Mr. Green intuited, then ‘it is only necessary to discover some plan by which the aerial vehicle may ascend and descend to meet the current that will waft it to its port of destination.’ Crestadoro refers to the palm leaf fan of Mr. Wise which enabled him to reverse his large balloon in a current. Crestadoro might have pondered whether this might be an alternative to the massive propelling machine of his early patent.

He also writes in detail of air resistance and the inclined plane, the very topics that were debated during the Exhibition and which Cayley had first identified back in the 1790s.

The pamphlet is like the essay of a well read enthusiast and perhaps shows more reasoned working out than the wild surmise and jumbles of detail that characterise other of Crestadoro’s writings. (Although the thirteen line sentence on some idea of a self-propelling circumferential inclined plane, flying round the earth to arrive at the same zenith one foot higher than the point of departure, is reassuringly classic Crestadoro).

## Model

There is minimal detail in the pamphlet of his models, no dimensions or record of how far they rose, for Crestadoro is more interested in his conjectures of dimensions, lift and ascending power for a real balloon. All we are told is that there were two experimental models exhibited: ‘one is made of sheet copper and the other of sheet brass, each weighing 3 ounces to a square foot’, with the added note that sheet metal can now be rolled to nine times that lightness. There is this description of the method:

> The model exhibited is intended to show, by experiment, the working of the principle. This is done by placing the metallic model over a lighted gas-burner, representing on a small scale the furnace. The upper tap being connected with an empty skin-balloon, for the purpose of collecting and measuring the quantity of air which escapes from the metallic balloon under the action of heat, shows how easily the internal air can be rarefied to a point corresponding to a buoyant power of at least one-third of an ounce per cubic foot. By the injection of two or three cubic inches of water, steam is generated, and the partial vacuum greatly increased.

As no one else is credited with the illustration, it is likely Crestadoro sketched the balloon which soars on the first page with the summary of the invention’s purpose:

> The object of the proposed apparatus is to provide a substantial aerostat, which, dispensing with gas and ballast, shall have the power of regulating its own ascent and descent, and be capable of lifting in the air any weight, and of continuing to exert its power for any requisite length of time.

The sketch is beguilingly simple, none of the magnificent trappings of swathes, gilding, decoration that adorned the balloons of monarchical or state celebration, none of the fancy crinolines of the pleasure gardens, but a plain shape, painted or stitched with dancing figures holding hands in a circle of unity. In the base, tiny figures suggest different nationalities. To emphasise the visual message, the balloon bears the legend: ‘To the Union of the Human family’ and a flag proclaiming: ‘England’s welcome to all nations’. Had Crestadoro received a coat of arms, it would surely have featured a balloon image of peace and harmony. To the genial and gentle Crestadoro, science and invention could only signify benefit and wonder.

As with his other inventions, it is probable that Crestadoro was harking back to ancient

experiments: the theoretical flying ship of the Jesuit Francesco Lana de Terzi, using vacuum-filled metal balloons, is a likely candidate. Richard Dee wrote of Lana:

> His vow of poverty and fear of the ungodly imbalance such a machine would create prevented him from actually trying it out. If he had, we would have discovered that the weight of the encasing 'balloon' strong enough to withstand the external air pressure around an effective vacuum would be more than the lift it produced - but it was a neat idea.[219]

Similarly, this was the weakness of Crestadoro's idea, fine for models but not valid for scaling up as he calculated. This was a point two commentators picked up, and has always been the dubious area inventors have to confront. Even at what is deemed the very first technical exhibition, 1683 in Paris, the new approach of experimental theory caused many objections to 'the permissibility of inferring from the model the working of the final machine.'[220]

Fig.17 Crestadoro's Balloon

## Reactions to the Metallic Balloon

Who can forget the man who invented the metallic balloon? The RAS certainly remember Crestadoro and his models, and their librarian, Brian Riddle, was courteously helpful in suggesting sources I could use to trace the history of aeronautics. However, he had no information on what had happened to those constructions of copper and brass after their appearance at the 1868 Exhibition. There is little hope they will be discovered, for as Nick Forder of the Manchester Air and Space Museum wrote to me: 'The RAS has, probably, the finest library and archive of early ballooning material in the country and their archivist, Brian Riddle, has spent a great deal of time tracing the whereabouts of objects which have passed through the hands of the RAS.'[221]

There are two lengthy comments on the metallic balloon which have survived in print.

## Sir William Fairbairn's View

The first is a letter from the great engineer Sir William Fairbairn, dated 27 January 1869. It was printed fully in the *Manchester Guardian* obituary for Crestadoro, cited as evidence of Crestadoro being 'warmly interested in

the subject of aerial locomotion.'

The letter's date is from the time when Crestadoro was still trying to promote the models that were shown at the Aeronautical Exhibition in the previous year. It is not clear whether Sir William Fairbairn was aware of the model having being exhibited in 1868 but it would be odd if he did not, as he was a member of the Council. Sir William Fairbairn takes care to give an honest assessment as well as a helping hand to this odd Chief Librarian of his city. (William Fairbairn came to Manchester around 1813 as a millwright, and was knighted in 1869):

> Dear sir,-I have carefully looked over the description of your aerial machine of metallic construction, and although I am satisfied that a spherical balloon of 200ft. Diameter can be made, I am nevertheless of opinion that it would be subject to collapse at a comparatively low pressure. As regards its buoyant power, I have no doubt your calculations are correct, but it appears to me, when once afloat, it would become perfectly unmanageable. This is the case with all balloons, whether composed of textile or metallic material. I have never yet been able to discover any feasible mode of navigating so weak and so bulky a machine through the elastic and yielding medium of the atmosphere. In the present state of our knowledge there does not appear to me any chance of surmounting these difficulties, and my advice would be – not to spend any more money upon it. I would, however, recommend you to send the model and description of the invention to the Aeronautical Society of London, and, if you think proper, I will write to the President or secretary to bring the subject before the Society at an early meeting, when, I hope, you will be able to attend. I will also endeavour to be present and take part in the discussion – Believe me, dear sir, sincerely and truly yours, 'W. Fairbairn.

The quoted letter was followed with the observation that: 'The model referred to was shown at the aeronautical exhibition at the Crystal Palace in June, 1868.'

Sir William Fairbairn would have known Crestadoro in the Manchester circles of business, technology and scholarship. His advice not to waste more money on the invention is echoed elsewhere by Crestadoro's friends, such as Robert Smiles. The kindness of Fairbairn's tone reflects well, both on himself and on the recipient .

## Joseph Johnson's View

Another Mancunian also commented, shortly after Crestadoro's death, on the ballooning aspect of his life. The lengthy account is given in *City News Notes and Queries*, reprinted from the *Manchester City News*.[222] The writer was fascinated by both the invention and the approach of Dr. Crestadoro, and it certainly reads as if he had known him. Certainly the tone is light and humorous but there is admiration rather than ridicule. The writer is a Joseph Johnson of the Isle of Man. He was a Manchester man, a bookseller there during the 1850s and early 1860s. He had continuing family links with Manchester after his move to the Isle of Man, contributing frequently to the *Manchester City News*: 'that most literary of provincial newspapers'.[223]

A Liberal, ardent reformer, and deeply interested in religious, political and social questions, he was exactly the sort of person who would be drawn to Crestadoro. There is some evidence that Crestadoro was a friend, judging by a newsy letter to him from a Mrs Johnson at Douglas, who surely was Joseph Johnson's wife: 'I trust you and your good lady are well. We have removed to the Front of the Sea - a very nice house - always by the "sad sea waves". With kind words for your excellent wife and all our good wishes for yourself'.[224]

The *Manx Quarterly* comments that: 'Mr. Johnson had a lively appreciation of the ridiculous and the humorous, and he was an admirable raconteur. Particularly did he relish relating a good story when it told in any way against himself, for he was too considerate to impart sufficient zest to the stories in which his friends or enemies did not show up very well.'

So how did he deal with 'Dr. Crestadoro as a Balloonist'? He explains clearly the principles on which Crestadoro based his design and the models but, more than that, he gives the sense of what drove Crestadoro and how he conversed with his friends.

> The late Professor Crestadoro, chief librarian of the Manchester Free Libraries, was the author of a privately-circulated pamphlet on Aeronautation. He had a firm conviction that ultimately, in the distant future it might be, aerial navigation would supersede steam ships and railways; and that not only would there be immense balloons and public conveyances carrying large numbers of passengers, but small private balloons which would be much more common than ordinary street conveyances. His plan or theory was simple. Nothing, he would say, is so well established as that the upper air moves in currents….
>
> When it was suggested to Dr. Crestadoro that the silk of the balloon would be in constant danger from the stove, his answer was: 'Not at all; my balloon would be made from iron!' He had an experimental balloon constructed from sheets of iron almost as thin as the thinnest tissue paper.

Joseph Johnson continues to discuss the earlier idea of constructing balloons from metal, including Lana's sailing ship. He concludes that Crestadoro's metal balloon may be sufficiently light and strong to do all that is required but doubts the existence of the reliable air currents: 'Without the existence of such currents, which have yet to be demonstrated, Dr. Crestadoro's ballooning project is ingenious, but, like so many other projects, perfectly utopian.'

## The Man who Invented the Lead Balloon

There is no clear derivation for the phrase of going down (or going over in the American version) like a lead balloon. Its first published use is claimed for an American newspaper cartoon in June 1924, but who first concocted it is unknown. Perhaps, somewhere along the line the notion of Crestadoro's metallic balloon, the only one in history, might have prompted the lead balloon idea.

Searching on Google brings up another legend of how the heavy metal band, Led Zeppelin, came by the name: a response to the sneer from Keith Moon about the New Yardbirds being likely to go down like a lead balloon.

Most curious of all as a follow up of the metallic balloon is a French Patent published as recently as 18 June 1993, No. 2,684,952. By Giraud Andre, *Aerostats Using Water Vapor as Principal Lift Gas*. The translator gives a harsh rebuke as a note:

> the writer has used the expressions 'water vapor' and 'steam' promiscuously and synonymously throughout; in any case, what is meant is steam, i.e. H20 in the gaseous state, at a temperature below its critical point, which strictly speaking is a vapor, not a gas.

This patent seems to follow very much the same thought processes as Crestadoro: the problems of the combustible gases, the revived use of heated air to lift, the limitations of temperature so derived and the dimensions of the balloon therefore needed. Reference is made to an earlier French Patent No.1,527,954 which advocated the use of water vapour and a double-layer envelope, one of which layers is a metallic foil. The authors point out problems and proceed to offer their solution. I cannot

follow the technology but the text and diagrams are reminiscent of Crestadoro and his fellows of the AS. But the point is that perhaps Crestadoro's idea would have been vindicated with the new synthetic fabrics now available. After all, as Don Cameron pointed out in describing how synthetic fabrics, controllable propane burners and helium enabled Pilatre de Rozier's vision of a combination balloon to be realised: 'Some of the best ideas are old ones.'[225]

So if Crestadoro was the man who invented the lead balloon there is more to the phrase than first appears.

## The Last Venture: Aeroplane or Glider?

Hats off to Crestadoro. The metallic balloon, despite his efforts at promotion, did not bring him the acclaim he hoped for. But like an inventor in a garden shed of scrapped gadgets, he recycled the furnace design into his fire grate patent and, complete with poker, takes it to a very earthbound exhibition in 1874, as related in Chapter Seven.

Busy with the demands of his post as Chief Librarian, involved towards the end of his life with ideas for taxation reform and joint stock companies, he still apparently stayed in the race to find navigational flight, turning away from balloons to the new forms that would eventually capture the future. It took people like Crestadoro to have the visions, for the ideas of controlled, powered flight were still generally regarded as fantasies. Even after the Wright flight in 1903 the *Manchester Guardian* remained unconvinced, stating in the leader column of 11 September 1908: 'We cannot understand to what practical use a flying machine that is heavier than air can be put'.[226]

Despite the ridicule the quest for heavier-than-air flight had continued, with the emphasis on gliders until the light petrol engine came along in 1902. Technologies transfer and merge, and from various threads came the notion of the glider which combined with an engine became the aeroplane. In Germany in 1889, Otto Lilienthal, produced practical gliders which, together with Cayley, inspired the Wright brothers.

Others were on the track of gliders. John Joseph Montogomery in California reputedly built three gliders and possibly made many flights around 1884, and there was a Scot too, Percy Pilcher. Man-lifting kites were developed by the Australian Lawrence Hargrave and the American larger than life character, Samuel Franklin Cody.

The key developments for gliders all take place after Crestadoro's lifetime, yet it looks as if he might have been a pioneer in this field and his efforts sadly lost.

## Frederick D. Artingstall

Mrs. Crestadoro may well have had sympathy for the widow of another Manchester aeronautical pioneer. Frederick D. Artingstall died in 1876 at 248 Collyhurst Road, where his widow was said to have been left totally unprovided for, largely as a result of his scientific pursuits.

As Brian R. Robinson describes him, Artingstall was one of the few Manchester men to be actively involved with practical aeronautics, and he was experimenting at exactly the same time as Crestadoro. Like Crestadoro he was an AS member, writing an essay for the Annual Report of 1866 on his experimental model to combine the steam engine with the wing strokes of birds. The first trial had run with his friends, perhaps Crestadoro amongst them, collapsing with laughter as the engine with two wings, hung from the ceiling, performed wild whirlings and convulsions, anything but flying, and in the end exploded, sending the friends into speedy retreat. On the second trial Artingstall switched to rotary motion and the model achieved lift before the wings 'parted company

with the engine'. The Flying Ship specification was presented to the AS and Artingstall carried on observing birds and writing in 1873 of his conviction that 'flapping bird flight was within the muscle power of man'. Recent appeals for archival material have brought to light from 'a Didsbury man' some of the Artingstall's family's collections, including those of Frederick, 'a small-time inventor who in the 1860s dabbled unsuccessfully in the problems of powered flight.' There is a letter from the Duke of Argyll in July 1868 throwing doubt on his experiments with steam engines: 'If you ever made an engine which lifted itself from the ground by wings you have done much to solve the problems of flight.'[227]

Crestadoro asserted that the muscle power of birds was greatly over estimated and their ability to glide great distances should be studied. It is clear in Crestadoro's pamphlet that he has paid much attention to gliding, looking not just at birds but other creatures who, seemingly effortlessly can sail through the air:

> Yet, while in Aeronautics, air is fully considered as a retarding medium, its capacity and effects as a powerful counteractor of gravity are seldom if ever, taken into account, although they are strikingly illustrated in the principle of the parachute. A beautiful illustration of the same principle is also presented in various departments of nature. The flying squirrel moves in graceful curves from tree to tree on the parachute principle. The pollen of plants is carried from one place to another by this mode … There can be no doubt that, in consequence of its weight and elasticity, air is both a sustaining and uplifting principle, by which the flight of birds is greatly facilitated.

Crestadoro and Artingstall would have met up through the AS and surely furthered each other's ideas.

Crestadoro died in 1879 and nothing would have been known of his continued lively experimentation with aeronautics were it not for the casual mention by W.G. Fry, the Deputy Chief Librarian, in an article entitled *The Manchester Public Libraries 1852-1938*. Together with an interesting biographical note on the 'remarkable personality' Dr. Crestadoro, he includes the riveting tale of the glider in the empty room, quoted at the start of this chapter.

Had the librarians been more aware of their city's aviation history, perhaps they might have preserved this relic, and what revelations might have emerged? Did Crestadoro hit on the practical glider before Otto Lilienthal? Presumably the model was thrown away without anyone appreciating its possible significance.

So there we have the Chief Librarian of Manchester, evading the Committee members and his own assistants, to work away in secret at his inspired vision of a glider. Axon published a paper in 1884[228] on the first balloon ascent in England, adding much incidental background, including Lana's metallic globes. It is tempting to think he might have discussed it all originally with Crestadoro, and perhaps was shown the glider.

## A Powerful Locality

The Campfield Library where Crestadoro spent most of his career was originally a Robert Owen Hall of Science. When the hostility of nearby churches closed this down, the building became the resort for prostitutes. The Council bought it as cheap option for the first Reference and Lending Library, opened in 1852. It was not a good decision, for by 1877 the building was in a dangerous state and had to be demolished.

The new Market Hall, constructed largely of iron and glass in the mode inspired by Sir Joseph

Paxton for the Crystal Palace, was created on the site. A new lending library, the Deansgate Branch, was built on the corner of the block and opened in 1882. These magnificently ornate Victorian offices and arcades now house the Cervantes Institute and the Tapas bar, Dimitri's Tavern. It has been wrongly documented in some sources that this corner was the site of the original Campfield Library.

The point is important for the Market Hall on the true Campfield Library site is now the Air and Space Hall, a strange turn of events.

Nick Forder, curator of the Air and Space Hall knows of Crestadoro for his ballooning fame, but he had no idea of the connection with Crestadoro's other life and, like me, was struck by the coincidence. For several years there have been plans to renovate the Hall and perhaps to mount a permanent display for ballooning in the North West and include a feature on Crestadoro. This was the discussion as Nick recorded it in an e-mail, 15 April 2003:

> In terms of commemorating the work of Crestadoro, I can tell you that the Air & Space Hall currently houses a small exhibition on ballooning courtesy of the British Balloon Museum and Library. The Air & Space Hall is going to be significantly altered over the next two years, and, as ballooning has been identified as a subject to be featured in the new display, the Museum of Science & Industry will be working with the British Balloon Museum and Library to create a new exhibition relating to all aspects of ballooning in the North West area. Clearly the work of Crestadoro needs to be featured as part of this, and any help you can offer in regard of this will be greatly appreciated.

My father and myself often took my two sons to the Museum of Science and Industry to which the Air and Space Hall belongs. We explored all the halls, amongst them, the first railway station in the world, the sewers (the 'I Spy' stuffed cat and rats are now sadly departed), the locomotives, all the engineering marvels (including the replica of the Ancient Greek steam engine, the textile machinery and the early computers). The Air and Space Hall always had to be included. There is even a replica of Stringfellow's famous triplane that had won first prize at the 1868 Aeronautical Exhibition.

The Campfield territory holds one of the world's greatest science and technology museums, and it is strange to think how much of it relates to Crestadoro: from railways to domestic heating, from aerial navigation to computing, on all these he made a mark. But the oddity of the man who invented the metallic balloon having spent so many years at Campfield Library on what is now the site of the Air and Space Museum, does send a shiver down the spine.

[196] W. G. Fry, 'The Manchester Public Libraries 1852-1938', *The Manchester Review,* Summer, 1938, p. 293

[197] Barbara Ronchetti, 'The earliest Italian immigrants in Manchester', in Antonio Ria, *Italians in Manchester* (Manchester: Musemeci, c.1990) p. 53

[198] Richard Holmes, *The Age of Wonder: How the Romantic Generation discovered the Beauty and Terror of Science* (London: Harper, 2008) p.134

[199] Holmes, *The Age of Wonder* p. 134 (This is supposedly a cutting from The Balloonіad but I cannot find in the Two Cantos edition)

[200] Holmes, *Falling Upwards*, p.58

[201] Brian R. Robinson, *Aviation in Manchester: a Short History* (Manchester: Manchester Branch of the Royal Aeronautical Society, 1977) p. 6

[202] Robinson, *Aviation in Manchester* 1977, p.12

[203] Robinson, *Aviation in Manchester* 1977, p.12

[204] Robinson, *Aviation in Manchester* 1977, p.12

[205] MA, Letter 69/28

[206] Holmes *The Age of Wonder*, p. 159

[207] Holmes *The Age of Wonder*, p. 145

[208] Richard Dee, *The Man who Discovered Flight: George Cayley and the First Airplane* (Toronto: McClelland, 2007) Prologue p.1

[209] Dee, *The Man who Discovered Flight*, p. 302

[210] White, Jr. 'Eilmer of Malmesbury', pp. 97-111

[211] White, Jr. 'Eilmer of Malmesbury', pp. 97-111

[212] L.T.C. Rolt, *The Balloonists: The History of the First Aeronauts* (Stroud: Sutton, 2006) p.192

[213] Frank H. Smith, 'Oldest Aeronautical Society: The story of the RAS', *Flight*, (15 January 1960) pp. 69 -71

[214] 'The Forthcoming Aeronautical Exhibition', *London Daily News* (6 June 1868)

[215] 'Aeronautical Society's Exhibition', *Islington Gazette* (16 June 1868)

[216] Henry Coxwell, *The Times* (9 July 1868)

[217] 'Destruction of a Balloon by Fire', *Dundee Courier & Argus*, (30 June 1868)

[218] *Report of the First Exhibition of the Aeronautical Society of Great Britain, held at the Crystal Palace, on the 25th June, 1868, and ten following days* (Greenwich: printed by Henry S. Richardson, 1868)

[219] Dee, *The Man who Discovered Flight*, p.49

[220] Walter G. Endrei, 'The first technical exhibition', *Technology and Culture* 9: 2 (April 1968) pp 181-183

[221] Nick Forder, e-mail to author, 15 April 2003

[222] Joseph Johnson, 'Dr. Crestadoro as a balloonist', *Manchester City News Notes and Queries,* 17 (26 April 1879) p. 90-91

[223] 'Joseph Johnson Died March 7th 1907', *Manx Quarterly*, (2 June 1907)

[224] MA, In Letter 38/14

[225] Don Cameron, 'Foreword' in Rolt, *The Balloonists*, p.10

[226] Robinson, *Aviation in Manchester*, p. 17

[227] Audrey Linkman and Bill Williams, 'Recovering the People's Past: the Archive Rescue Programme of Manchester Studies', *History Workshop,* 8 (Autumn 1979) pp. 111-126

[228] W.E.A. Axon, 'The First balloon ascent in England', *Manchester Guardian* (15 September 1884)

# Chapter Nine: From Starving Trade to Book Trade

> I lived here for two years at the rate of fourteen pence a day - fourteen pence, I tell you; it is a starving trade in London[229]

> …having found much valuable assistance in the engagement of Mr. Crestadoro.[230]

## Back to teaching

Crestadoro's bid for making money from invention terminated in the sale of the Impulsoria in the yard of the Waterloo Hotel, Manchester on 21 September 1852. His passion for tinkering with science and technology remained to the end of his days but he needed to find new directions to survive in England.

The decade of the 1850s reveals a mixture of his approaches, from language tuition and setting up as an information agent through to the bibliographic commissions that would solidify into a respectable career. There is a gap in his residence record in London between January 1860 and September 1861, the period in which he may have been in Italy or in Paris for the publication of *Du Pouvoir Temporel*. He falsely gave 1861 as the start of his appointment in Manchester on his naturalisation application.

From 1862 onwards Crestadoro found his niche in Manchester and his financial worries were over, enabling him to get married, to become naturalized and to have rewarding years where both his scholarship and inventions could flourish.

But in the earlier decade of struggle in London, Crestadoro resorted to the usual path for educated

Italian immigrants of selling his language skills. He must have dreaded a return to this drudgery though at least he was free of the oppressive controls he would have suffered as a teacher in Italy.

## The starving trade

There were two main waves of Italian political exiles following the uprisings of the 1830s and then the revolt of 1848. The passionate young men who fled to England, with their own dramas, rivalries and disputes, enlivened the social and intellectual scenes. Across the country, from London to Edinburgh and Glasgow, their enterprises, public lectures and need for assistance brought together prominent supporters amongst the intellectual elite. Fund-raising committees were set up, balls, bazaars, concerts, lectures held for their benefit. In particular, the entry of notable exiles into upper-middle and upper class households through tutoring, established valuable English contacts to further the cause of Italian unification.

Teaching Italian language and literature was an obvious trade. As well as Italian being considered part of an Englishman's education, and an attractive modern language for girls to acquire, there was fashionable interest in the literature and romance of that dismembered country. There was competition, however, from other European political refugees: 'Some of the luckier newcomers found employment as teachers of Italian or singing, but Italian was beginning to be ousted by German as the smart language to learn.'[231]

Many of the prominent exiles turned at some stage to tutoring in their native language – some with mixed feelings: 'Mazzini had an aversion to teaching Italian as a means of earning a livelihood, that was shared by a good many of his unfortunate compatriots, and looked to the reviews to provide him with his daily bread.'[232]

The most talented of the exiles display a similar pattern of teaching Italian language and literature, giving guest lectures, publishing grammars, translations or books on Italy, writing articles and seeking university appointments.

Help was not always forthcoming from the Italian refugees already established: 'The Italian refugees of the 1820s, who were richer and moved on a higher social plane that those of the 1830s, were slow in using their connections to find jobs for their poorer compatriots.'[233] It was a nuisance to be besieged by impoverished countrymen who, if helped, might then be in competition.

In 1823, Antonio Panizzi as a young and desperately poor political exile turned to the drudgery of tutoring in Liverpool. He soon progressed to giving lectures in Liverpool, and in 1828 to a poorly paid post as Chair of Italian Language and Literature at the new London University (from 1836 the University College London). In 1831, he started his career at the BM as an assistant librarian.

Panizzi detested the memory of scrabbling a living through teaching. When another exile, Antonio Gallenga, surfaced in London in 1839 and applied to Panizzi for help in finding pupils, he found a discouraging response:

> And what can I do for you? Italian lessons? In London? Coals to Newcastle! I never found any for myself. I lived here for two years at the rate of fourteen pence a day - fourteen pence, I tell you; it is a starving trade in London.[234]

## University Posts

Finding a teaching post, or even better, a university post, was a great advance but the bar against Catholics at first ruled out the traditional universities, as Gallenga found when he tried for the Taylorian Institution chair in Oxford. Another Italian exile, Count Aurelio Saffi, became the Italian

lecturer there in 1856 when the bar on Catholicism was over.

Some political exiles, including several ex-priests, made sure they were known as anti-Catholic. Valerio Pistrucci, a candidate for the Chair at King's College in 1847, sent a follow-up letter assuring the Board that he had adjured Catholicism and: 'adhered to the creed of the reformed Church as more consonant with reason and just.' Furthermore: 'my wife is English and that my children were christened, and are brought up as members of the Church of England.'[235]

The exiles competed strenuously for university posts. Gabriele Rossetti detested Panizzi for beating him to the London University post in 1828. It was often a case of who had the best support team. Panizzi had Foscolo and Lord Brougham against Rossetti's less favoured Admiral and Lady Moore. At this stage, Rossetti was giving as many as forty-five lessons a week at half a guinea a lesson to support his family. His turn came in 1831 when he became professor of Italian at King's College, London, welcomed as an anti-Papist by this Church of England institution. On the strength of his Dante *Comento*, he won this against Gallenga even though he was supported by the heavyweights of Bulwer-Lytton, Disraeli, Carlyle and Dickens. But like Panizzi, Rossetti made little income from it, around £10 per year. It was the status it gave him as a private tutor that was the main value both socially and in commanding higher fees for private tuition.[236]

## Teaching and Marrying

Even Mazzini had to look for pupils to combat poverty in exile. Mazzini had been dismayed to find 'a swarm of competing Italian teachers' in London, as his devoted friend Mrs. Eliza Fletcher recorded.[237]

Mazzini was happy to teach when his pupils were sympathetic, but in 1841 his educational energies went into founding in 1841 a free school for the desperately situated street-trading Italians, mainly boys but also some adults and girls. This enterprise brought in influential patrons, the likes of Lord Shaftesbury, Harriet Martineau, Charles Dickens, the Carlyles, J.S. Mill and unpaid teachers such as Joseph and George Toynbee. All the publicity enhanced Mazzini's reputation. For survival he had attempted various business dealings such as wine import, but as his fame grew he supported himself through his writing.

Remaining single, although adored by many ladies, Mazzini scorned those who, like Gallenga, gained security by marrying into wealth: 'Mariotti, alias Gallenga, for he is now using his own name, has married a young, gentle English girl who already has five hundred pounds a year and will have one thousand one day. *Bravi tutti*!'[238]

The girl was Juliet Schunck of a prominent and intellectual German-Jewish family in Manchester. They were married in 1847. After her death in 1855 Gallenga was soon courting again, though the young girl concerned declined him. He remarried in 1858, an English widow, Ann Robinson.

Gallenga succeeded Count Carlo Pepoli, another ex prisoner and exile, at University College London (UCL) in 1845. Pepoli married a Scottish lady, much older than himself, spitefully described by Carlyle as 'elderly, moneyed and fallen in love with a romantic in distress.'[239] The marriage proved a happy one.

Count Aurelio Saffi, political exile and patriot, followed the same pattern. He was tutor to the Wedgwoods, wrote on Italian affairs and married an English girl, Georgina Crauford, who was descended from Robert Walpole. As Rudman commented: 'It is interesting to observe how many of these Italian exiles married English girls, a fact which explains why such unions were fairly common themes in novels of the period.'[240]

Gabriele Rossetti was unusual in never applying to be naturalised, but he followed the trend in marrying a lady who was English born, though her father was Italian. Frances Polidori was the daughter of Gaetano Polidori, an Italian writer and teacher living in London, and Anna Maria Pierce, a governess. Her brother, John Polidori, was Byron's physician, writer of *The Vampyre.* Talents ran in these Italian and English genes, as Frances' own children included both Dante Gabriele and Christina Rossetti. (Incidentally Gaetano Polidori like Gabriele Rossetti was a candidate for the University College London post that Panizzi won.)

Crestadoro married an Englishwoman but only when he became secure financially.

## Crestadoro as a Language Teacher

The key difference between Crestadoro and the political exiles is that he came to England on business. He had some contact with the Italian political network, was involved in some way as evidenced by *Du Pouvoir Temporel,* but in his first years in England he moved mainly in the circles of inventors and engineers. Whilst political refugees from Italy, Germany, Austria and Hungary poured into England in the aftermath of the failed 1848 uprisings, Crestadoro and Masserano arrived in 1849, with nothing apparently in their thoughts other than the launch of the Impulsoria at Nine Elms.

Yet like the political exiles, Crestadoro in the end had to turn to teaching. He had the advantages of being an experienced teacher, of having written his grammar book back in 1843 and of having translated Bancroft but little else. No powerful friends for Crestadoro amongst the intellectual and social elite. On his naturalisation application, Crestadoro wrote of himself: 'he came to London on private business relating to a Patent mechanical Invention and with the intention of remaining only a few months but as the patent did not answer he established himself in London as Professor of Languages and Mathematics'.

It is not clear when he first set himself up as a professor of languages, or when he dropped mathematics. The first advertisement I can trace is from the *Morning Post* for Thursday 15 April 1858, appearing again on the Saturday: 'ITALIAN LANGUAGE and LITERATURE. Professor CRESTADORO, of the University of Turin, has a few hours disengaged.— 48, Bernard Street, Russell Square.'

This is much briefer than surrounding advertisements, which may suggest it was all Crestadoro could afford. However, it does cleverly convey the idea that he was much in demand and this was a rare opportunity for a pupil. Crestadoro was astute in selling.

The next advertisement is in *The Times* for Monday, 7 March 1859 and it is in terms of a reminder of his availability: 'ITALIAN LANGUAGE and LITERATURE Signor CRESTADORO (of the University of Turin) continues to give INSTRUCTION through the English or French - 42, Great Russell St. Bloomsbury, W.C.' The advertisement is boosted with the additional selling point of teaching in French.

The 1861 Census lists 'Andrew Crestadoro' as residing at 18 Great Ormond Street and describes him as 'Graduate of University Turin & Professor of Language'. His date of birth is given as 1814 and his age forty-seven but it is an open question as to whether that is a mistake or a deliberate ploy by Crestadoro.

Crestadoro himself admitted he found colloquial English difficult, as mentioned in the *Manchester Guardian* obituary, and he must have been confident in French to offer that as an alternative.

Although he did not have influential support, Crestadoro aimed high for he was amongst the 'eleven Italian gentlemen'[241] who applied in 1861 for the coveted post of Chair of Italian at UCL. The most recent incumbents were Antonio Gallenga (1848-58) and Count Carlo Arrivabene (1858-61). Crestadoro was not really in this league.The UCL Senate Committee minutes for 18 October 1861 list Crestadoro as a new applicant. A Signor de Tivoli was appointed on 14 January 1862.

When established as Chief Librarian in Manchester, Crestadoro was requested by the Principal of Owen's College in 1867: 'to undertake the Professorship of Italian Language, which would require my attendance at the college for an hour on Tuesday evenings when my official time at the Library is over.'[242] It appears that the Committee refused him permission and so denied him academic prestige.

Crestadoro's early struggles with colloquial English may have been painful but ultimately did not hold him back. This was a factor too in the careers of other Italian exiles. Gabriele Rossetti retained a strong Italian accent. Jane Carlyle teased Mazzini on his little oddities of speech. Gallenga had difficulty with pronunciation and accent – 'w', 'wh', and 'ths' gave him particular trouble. Panizzi came to England, 'this new and most strange country, of whose language he so far spoke not one word.'[243] Despite this he was soon so advanced in the language that by 1825 was able to deliver his acclaimed lectures on Italian poets to a distinguished audience in Liverpool. But even Panizzi, who ably mastered English, struggled with 'th'.

## Reader Tickets at the BM

Panizzi was an ambitious man, his genius, scholarship, charisma and forceful character were rewarded in 1837 when he achieved the post of Keeper of the Printed Books at the BM, earning the angry resentment of the Rev. Henry Cary who had hoped for the post. The now powerful Panizzi transformed his department, and by 1853 was planning the new Reading Room. His vision was realised when the magnificent domed chamber was opened formally in 1857. His appointment to Principal Librarian in 1856 was inevitable, though some like Queen Victoria complained and his bitter enemies such as Carlyle and Monkton Miles denounced him. Frederic Madden, Keeper of Manuscripts, spat out his spite: 'Mr Bond informed me that Mr. P had told him this morning that he was sure of his appointment as P.L. The devil choke him with it, say I.'[244]

It is interesting to think how many patriots of various nationalities sat at the desks of Panizzi's famous Reading Room; Karl Marx is the one everyone cites. It is even more intriguing to think who actually sponsored their acquisition of that valuable document, a reader's ticket. Much can be derived from looking at records of readers' tickets. The scholarly Rev. Henry Cary, translator of Dante, sponsored Panizzi in his early years in England, and later became his embittered colleague. One of his lady admirers, Mrs Eliza Fletcher, sponsored Mazzini – attending three times a week saved on fuel.[245] Panizzi had greatly liked Felice Orsini when he met him in 1853. Orsini received a reader's ticket in 1856, intending to write on military tactics and he also asked Panizzi's help in finding pupils for Italian. Panizzi was deeply shocked at the news of Orsini's attempted assassination of the Emperor Napoleon in 1858.

A recommendation was essential for gaining a reader's ticket; even in the early days, the old Reading Rooms were drastically overcrowded. The capacity was initially for 120 readers but by 1830 there were 3000 registered readers. In 1833 two new reading rooms were agreed, and opened in 1837. Yet there was still a lack of space and the number of average readers stayed static because of this problem.

Once Panizzi's transformation of the BM took place there was huge resurgence of pressure for admittance. Rules became more restrictive to cope. P.R. Harris, in his enthralling history, captures the human side of the institution with the dastardly deeds of readers, the bizarre incidents, the eccentricities of both readers and staff and the pompous indignation of bishops and aristocrats, who thought they should be above all regulations. Panizzi raised the age of admission to twenty-one to curb all the youths who were crowding in: students from UCL, mechanics, and entrants for the Civil Service examinations. Applications had to be in writing, and recommendations from hotelkeepers would not be accepted. No one other than the Principal Librarian could grant admittance, whether long term or for the day.[246] Thieves, forgers of admission tickets, dirty readers infested with lice, people who damaged the books or used them as toilet paper, all caused more problems than worrying what a foreign revolutionary might be reading. In 1873 the rule of six-month renewal for readers' tickets was withdrawn; this had never been strictly enforced.[247]

## Crestadoro's Tickets

The BL Archivist, John Hopson, used the BM Central Archives to document Crestadoro's pattern of admission:

> Their Reading Room Registers show that 'Professor Andrew Crestadoro' first visited the Reading Room on 9 July 1849. His application was endorsed by Vaux of Coins & Medals and he gave his address as 7 Alfred Place, Bedford Square. Subsequent ticket renewals were 12 Oct 1852 & 25 April 1853 (5 Darlington, Vauxhall), 26 October 1853 (4a Claylands Road. Clapham Road), 30 August 1854 & 13 April 1855 (16 Millman Street, Bedford Row) & 25 October 1855 (23 New Millman Street).[248]

John Hopson supplied further information in response to my questions:

> Vaux's name is written in the Register by the side of Crestadoro's entry. This would imply that Crestadoro was at least known to Vaux (and was presumably trusted by him) as entry to the Reading Room was controlled quite strictly and required someone to vouch for a prospective new reader. If it had been simply a question of 'rubber stamping' there would have been no reason - or opportunity - for Vaux to be involved.
>
> Anyway, I think it's safe to say that Vaux and Crestadoro knew each other before Crestadoro's application to use the Reading Room. Whether this could be said to extend to 'friendship' is, at the moment, unknown.

P.R. Harris also checked the Register, and found in addition a renewal by Crestadoro on 1 January 1850, at the address 8 Knight Place, Wandsworth Road. He added that the 12 October 1852 renewal gave the address of 5 Harleyford Road, Vauxhall.

Crestadoro had wasted no time in applying for his reader's ticket, and it was granted within a few weeks of his first arrival in England. It was absolutely vital for him to find someone to sponsor him. Entry to the BM was essential for his advancement in any of the spheres he contemplated.

## Vaux of the Coins

The full name of 'Vaux of the Coins' is William Sandys Wright Vaux. My guess would be that Crestadoro met or already knew through the learned society, antiquarian and libraries network, and that the mysterious Lucien De Rosny, editor or translator of *Du Pouvoir Temporel*, might have been a mutual acquaintance.

Vaux entered the Department of Antiquities at the BM in 1841, was active in the Numismatic

Society from 1846, and became a fellow of the Royal Society, a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, secretary to the Royal Society of Literature and secretary to the Royal Asiatic Society in 1875. Someone like Vaux would be a likely visitor to Italy and conduct international correspondence.

The learned societies encompassed a broad range of topics: a new world of discovery, had been emerging since the eighteenth century and with it came systematic disciplines such as geology, physics and chemistry which soon would go their own way. But in the mid nineteenth century arts, sciences, antiquities and religion were still jostling together in such forums as the British Association for the Advancement of Science, parodied by Dickens as The Mudfog Society for the Advancement of Everything.[249]

There is no evidence of Crestadoro's membership of learned societies in his first years in England, but their records are patchy. He surely would have attended what he could of their events. Perhaps he met Vaux at such a forum, if he had not already encountered him in Italy or France. In 1877 Axon, Crestadoro and Vaux (by then librarian of the Royal Asiatic Society) were all appointed to the first council of the LA. Axon had been corresponding with Vaux from around the mid 1860s: the three had much in common.

The main source of information for William Sandys Wright Vaux (1818-1885) is the *DNB* entry, for there is no biography or memoir of him.

Oddly, there is one isolated giant mountain in the Rockies that bears his name. This tale takes some disentangling. Another William S. (Sansom) Vaux (1811-1882) presents a confusing parallel to Vaux of the Coins. This Vaux was a member of a famous Philadelphia family and he had similar interests, founding the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society in Philadelphia. He was a renowned mineralogist and inclined strongly to science. Other members of the Vaux family in Philadelphia were keen explorers of glaciers and mountains. But assumptions should never be made. Mount Vaux in British Columbia was named not after an American Vaux geologist or mountaineer but after the British Vaux of the Coins. His friend, Dr. James Hector, the Palliser Expedition geologist, named the mountain in honour of his friend, in memory of one of his favourite places, the BM. According to another account, the honour came because Vaux had helped secure funding for the Palliser Expedition.[250]

Vaux of the Coins seems to have been a sociable and well liked character. He is described in the *DNB* as 'kindhearted and unselfish' with 'a large circle of friends and acquaintances'. So Vaux was just the man to genially recommend Crestadoro for the precious reader's ticket. Vaux also 'was a good friend of Panizzi's', another angle to possible friendship networks.[251]

## Editor for Sampson Low

Crestadoro's fortunes improved when sometime in the mid 1850s, the publisher Sampson Low engaged him on production of the chief reference sources for the book and library trade, the various series of the *English Catalogue of Books*, formerly the *British Catalogue of Books*. There is no record of how they met, possibly at the BM, but the connection proved prestigious for Crestadoro. Sampson Low was a publisher of note, and his generous acknowledgement of Crestadoro's help significantly improved his prospects. Crestadoro proved his worth in the hard trade of publishing, and in learning the craft he developed the wealth of ideas that form *The Art of Making Catalogues*.

By his own account in the naturalisation application, from being a professor of languages and mathematics: 'he became the Editor of "The Index to Current Literature" which was published in

London by Messieurs Sampson Low and Company and he retained such editorship until the month of December 1861 when he was engaged to compile a catalogue of the Manchester Free Library'. Crestadoro wrongly dated his contract with Manchester in this application, so he may or may not be accurate on the time of the editorship, and his employment with Sampson Low covered more than the one publication he refers to.

## Edward Shelton

On 5 April 1862, he wrote to the Royal Literary Fund from his address of 18 Great Ormond Street, Queen Square, naming himself 'Prof. A. Crestadoro, Editor of the "Index to Current Literature"'.[252] This could mean he still held the post or had left it in December 1861, as he stated in his naturalisation application. The letter is an appeal on behalf of an Edward Shelton who is in ill health and no longer able to earn a living. Crestadoro states: 'I have known Mr Shelton for five or six years; I can bear witness to his diligence as a literary labourer during that time'.

This was surely the Edward Shelton described as a miscellaneous writer on the BL catalogue records. He was likely to have frequented the same haunts as Crestadoro with what seems to be jobbing work for publishers. According to an advertisement in the *Dublin Daily Express* of 7 October 1862, Shelton was the Assistant Editor of *The Dictionary of Daily Wants*. He was active in the 1850s and 1860s, producing a variety of books, including a handbook for railway travellers, accounts of battles, hints for emergencies, snippets from the journal *Diogenes*, and interestingly *The Dictionary of Every-Day Difficulties in reading, writing, and speaking the English language; or Hard Words made Easy, etc.*, published in 1862. Did Crestadoro, thinking of his own difficulties with spoken English, suggest this project to Edward Shelton?

I cannot trace whether Edward Shelton had ever been Crestadoro's colleague at Sampson Low: if he had, Crestadoro's employment may have started in 1856 or 1857. It is a pity not to know more of Crestadoro's friend, probably one of many in the publishing trade circles, but rare in being named.

## Sampson Low

There are several related Sampson Lows, and thanks to Boase and *DNB* they can be easily disentangled. Crestadoro's Sampson Low (1797-1886), referred to as the Elder, was the founder of the firm. He was the son of Sampson Low, a publisher, and printer of Berwick Street, Soho, who died in 1800. Crestadoro's Sampson Low set up as a bookseller, stationer and circulating library proprietor in 1819 at 42 Lamb's Conduit Street, and as the *DNB* entry describes: 'His reading-room was frequented by many literary men, lawyers and politicians.' Another way Crestadoro might have met him.

Sampson Low seems to have been a good hearted and sympathetic person. He was long remembered as a philanthropist, active for years on the committee of the Booksellers' Provident Institution, assisting book trade colleagues who had suffered hard times. With his eldest son, he reformed fire services and insurance provision in London through the founding of The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. In later years Crestadoro carried on the relationship from Manchester, recommending the firm as publisher of the *Catalogue of the Books in the Manchester Free Library Reference Department*. As Chief Librarian he remained in regular contact with Sampson Low for purchase of items. Usefully, Sampson Low had established an American office and agents.

Sampson Low was one of Mrs. Gaskell's publishers. Mrs. Gaskell dealt with a range of publishers,

from Charles Dickens and the periodical *Household Words*, to George Smith, Frederic Chapman and Sampson Low, whom she stigmatised as her 'rascally publisher'.[253] Marianne Gaskell quoted her mother in a letter to Charles Norton in 1857, in reference to Sampson Low and the American dealings: 'She says he has done one or two "dodgy" things of the kind before.'[254] (Surely this is one of the earliest uses of 'dodgy'). In fact, Sampson Low had been absolutely straight, as Mrs. Gaskell found out to her embarrassment. As she wrote later to Charles Norton: 'So don't give me up as a mercenary tricky woman though I acknowledge I should like to out-dodge Mr. Sampson Low if ever our wits came into contact.'[255]

Business letters from Mrs. Gaskell to Sampson Low seem cordial enough, apart from the odd sarcastic remark presuming he had not received previous letters as he had not responded, and she thanks him for sending the *Publishers' Circular*: 'in which I always find much to interest me.'[256] Did Mrs. Gaskell discuss Sampson Low with the new Chief Librarian of Manchester Free Libraries? There is little doubt that Mrs. Gaskell and Crestadoro would have met as most cultural events on the Manchester scene featured the presence of the Gaskells.

## Sampson Low and the Book Trade

Sampson Low's catalogues now supply the historians with vital bibliographic research material, just as in their day they provided the book trade with essential information and advertising. They give the view from which publishing history can be studied. Researchers routinely draw on the resources of Sampson Low's *The Publishers' Circular* to evidence findings. For example, Rosemary Ashton in *142 Strand* traces the dips in the publisher Chapman's fortunes by when he could not afford advertisements in Sampson Low's *Publishers' Circular*.[257]

Sampson Low published and developed the *English Catalogue of Books*, starting off by printing it and eventually taking it over completely. This is the book trade forerunner of the *British National Bibliography* (*BNB*) published, now online only, by the BL.

The significance and the value of

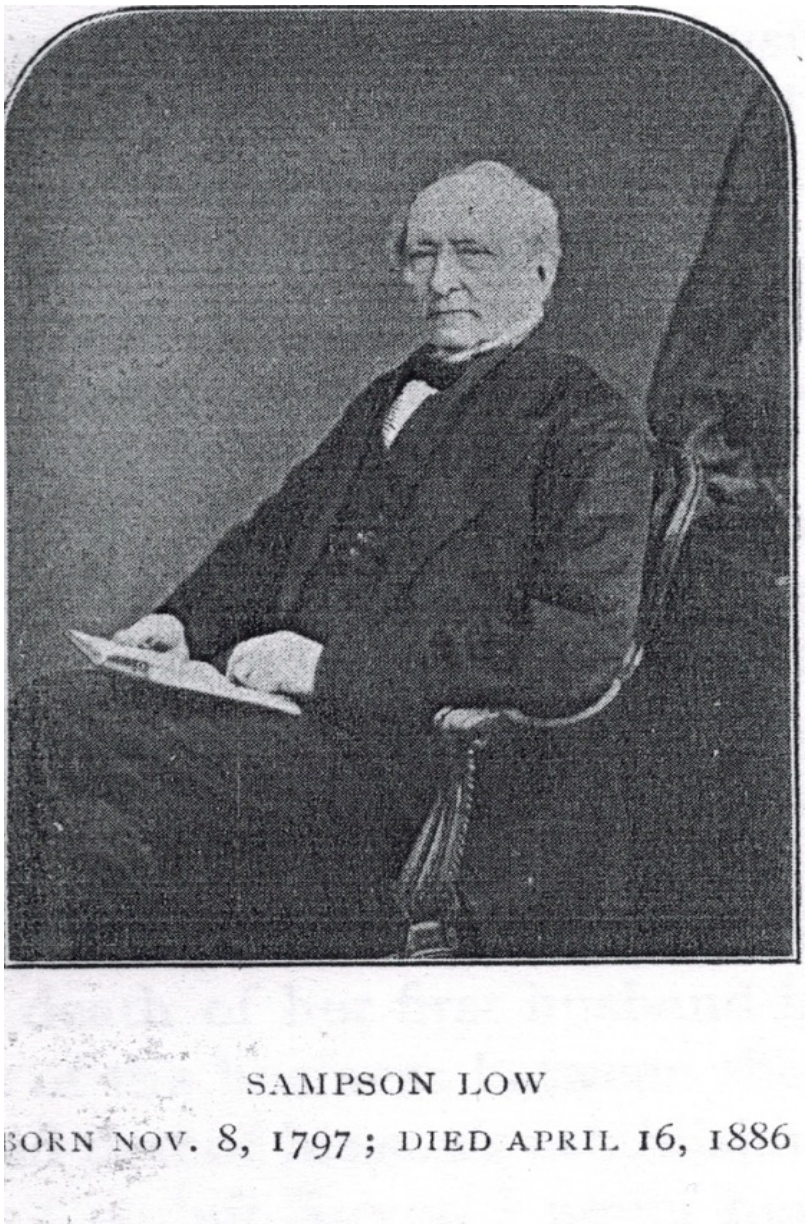



Fig.18 Sampson Low

his catalogues cannot be over estimated: he provided the map of a rapidly developing publishing world.

The Victorian age was the boom time for publishing in Britain. International trade, increasing literacy, population growth, urban life, power presses and paper machines, created a ravenous demand for books and a busy industry to supply the demand. Books had become part of railway travel. The intrepid and spry 'Miss Emily' sold her newspapers to train passengers at Preston Station, arousing the admiration of Charles Dickens and *Punch* before her glorious marriage to a cotton magnate.[258] A more famous example is W.H. Smith's introduction of railway bookstalls in 1848. Inevitably, there were bankruptcies in the periods of economic crises; there was the impact of foreign competition, alleviated by the publishing explosion that followed Gladstone's repeal of paper duty in 1861. It was an exciting world and Crestadoro was in the heart of it with his involvement in the publication that kept the record of book trade products.

## The Publishers' Circular

In 1837, fourteen leading publishers joined together to bring out a new fortnightly periodical for the book trade, *The Publishers' Circular,* uniting to combat underselling and to create a central resource of information. Sampson Low was appointed editor. The only bookselling trade journal before then was *Bent's Literary Advertiser.* Sampson Low improved and developed *The Publishers' Circular* and in 1867 he became the sole owner. *The Publishers' Circular* annual catalogues were produced from 1839 onwards forming the *British Catalogue*, later continued as the *English Catalogue*. Subject indexes were published in 1858 and 1876. It is in the 1858 index that Crestadoro's help is generously acknowledged. This is the blurb (and punctuation) for *The Publishers' Circular* as given in a letter from Sampson Low to photographer William Henry Fox Talbot on 18 June 1877:

> THE PUBLISHERS' CIRCULAR AND GENERAL RECORD OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN LITERATURE. is published by SAMPSON LOW and CO. on the 1st and 15th of each Month. It gives a transcript of the Title-page of every Work published in Great Britain, and every Work of interest published abroad Hs. per annum including postage.[259]

The titles may not sound exactly thrilling but so important are these journals that they have been reprinted in the late twentieth century. The *Publishers' Circular* was fully reproduced as a microfiche edition in 1988 by Simon Eliot and John Sutherland, and the subject indexes of 1858 and 1876 reprinted in 1976 and 1979 respectively. Few who use the result of Crestadoro's ingenious labour will know who he was.

The full history is given in the introduction to the microfiche edition of the *Publishers' Circular* and it is well worth reading this. There are lively descriptions of the unexpectedly opinionated directions the periodical took, especially under Sampson Low's partner, the ebullient Edward Marston, as well as examples of 'the gallery of surreal bric-a-brac' it advertised. The opening paragraphs neatly encapsulate the new world where Crestadoro was finding his niche:

> The launch of Bradshaw's Railway Timetables (1839) and the innovation of Rowland Hill's Penny Post in January 1840 coincide extraordinarily neatly with the first issue of The Publishers' Circular on 2 October 1837. Collectively all three new channels of 'intelligence' mark thresholds in national communication.[260]

## Crestadoro's Employment

The different editions of the *Publishers' Circular*, its supplements and indexes that appeared as first

the *British Catalogue* and then the *English Catalogue* are a bibliographic nightmare, compounded by the fact that different indexes cover overlapping periods, even when published at a later date. The approaches in the indexes vary and it is hard to track down the exact provenance of Crestadoro's improvements, especially as there is no precise information on how long he worked for Sampson Low.

There are no papers to detail Crestadoro's engagement with Sampson Low, for the main archive and premises, like those of many other famous publishing houses, were destroyed in the inferno of what was called The Second Great Fire of London, the aerial bombardment on 29 December 1940. Despite the warnings publishers had stayed determinedly in the spot that was linked to their trade, as intimately as Fleet Street is linked to newspapers. Tens of thousands of bombs devastated London that night and amongst the losses were five million books and much of the history of publishing.

The blitzed publishers, including the *Bookseller*, were soon defiantly back in business but as well as their stock: 'cavernous glowing holes, once basements full of stock, now the crematoria of the book world',[261] their centuries of history were lost. The publisher archives that did survive are recorded in sources such as the *Dictionary of Literary Biography 1993 Yearbook* and the online *Location Register of The Book Trade History Group*. Much has been pieced together for several publishing houses but the business of Sampson Low is only recorded through scraps. George Low, the great grandson, deposited autograph albums with the Open University Book History Archive, but there is nothing relevant there to the Crestadoro connection.

## Title Page

Sampson Low proclaimed that *The Publishers' Circular* included transcripts of title pages. At the end of the century, Crestadoro's emphasis on the value of the title page brought him unjust criticism from Duff Brown. In looking at Sampson Low, and at the Victorian publishing and library business, it is apparent that the exchange of title page transcriptions was fundamental to trade and scholarly enterprises: it was impossible for everyone to have access to all the books they wanted, and the slips acted as substitutes. (There are now many equivalents in the online environment, enabling some knowledge of a book without seeing the full item.) The Manchester Library Archives and the Axon papers at John Rylands Library are full of such exchanges of transcribed title pages. Crestadoro understood the currency and perhaps had a hand in initiating its provision in Sampson Low's publications.

## Crestadoro's Contribution: The Permutated Index

Crestadoro's main achievement was his permutated index: this is the major change he brought into Sampson Low's enterprises. Most of the current references to Crestadoro in information literature focus on this innovation, later called the KWIC index. For example, the Wikipedia entry directly acknowledges Crestadoro as the innovator:

> KWIC is an acronym for Key Word In Context, the most common format for concordance lines. The term KWIC was first coined by Hans Peter Luhn.[1] The system was based on a concept called keyword in titles which was first proposed for Manchester libraries in 1864 by Andrea Crestadoro.[2]

Many sources, such as this Wikipedia entry, give the date and context of the innovation incorrectly. Crestadoro first produced his permutated index in Sampson Low's *Index to the British Catalogue of Books published during the years 1837 to 1857 inclusive,* published in 1858. In his *Address* in this

publication Sampson Low expresses his gratitude to Crestadoro and describes the innovation of the permutated index:

> There has always been an acknowledged difficulty in adopting a system of Classification: but in the Indices appended to the Catalogues of 1855 and 1856, a new mode was attempted, in following out the author's own definition of his book by presenting a Concordance of Titles. This attempt was found to combine many advantages, and has been generally approved of.

It has been suggested that Crestadoro's invention of what became known as the KWIC index, the rotation of the key title words as entries in the index with the other words wrapped round them, had precedents in religious archives. Axon referred to this in the Crestadoro obituary and it was picked up in an article *Predecessors of Scientific Indexing Structures* by Bella Hass Weinberg, published in 2004: 'Ohlman (1999 p.189) states that the earliest reference to permutation techniques was The Art of Making Catalogs of Libraries, written by A. Crestadoro in 1856. Nearly a millennium earlier, however, the Masoretes created lists of words in permuted order'.[262]

If so, how intriguing that this ex-Piarist priest reintroduced the information structure that was so needed in the industrial world.

Crestadoro, in his *Index to the British Catalogue*, in his *The Art of Making Catalogues*, in the printed catalogues for Manchester Free Libraries, in all his letters and comments, maintained consistently his principles of giving the title page information fully, of using the title to show the author's intent, and to take the keywords or 'catchwords'[263] as apparently he and Sampson Low called them, to create a subject index that in itself provided a type of classification, rather than fitting works into a predetermined scheme:

> We think today of 'keyword indexing" as being a modern invention but it really isn't. Simply indexing under the words found in a title or document goes back a very long way. In 1850, British indexers Andrea Crestadoro and Sampson Low referred to this as 'catchword' indexing.[264]

It is interesting to trace the evolution of 'catchword' from its context in printing and in theatre to meaning catchword entry in titles. Gradually it was replaced by 'keyword'. Crestadoro's discussion of words, concepts and topics in *The Art of Making Catalogues* is even now fresh and inspiring: although proposing a simple scheme he was well aware of the complexities in the relationship of ideas and language. His term for the elements used in the index is 'subject-word'.

## Layout

The layout and structure of the *Index to the British Catalogue* are not immediately obvious but after a few pages the pattern is easily grasped: basically entry is given under each significant word of the title, supplemented by a network of helpful cross-references. Printing costs, the weight and size of the volumes that would be so frequently consulted had to be balanced against the provision of desirable information. The layout used in Crestadoro's indexes might be initially difficult for the modern reader to comprehend, but we would also struggle with the Victorian style of printed railway timetables. The system of dashes to represent the number of repeated words, the use of a reference number to a full entry, enabled compression without loss of meaning. In fact the more you browse the Crestadoro's printed indexes, the smoother the pattern becomes and the amount of data, the big picture, that can be taken in with one glance is extremely satisfying. (Dashes and dots to represent repetition on the printed page are of course not unique to Crestadoro but he used them

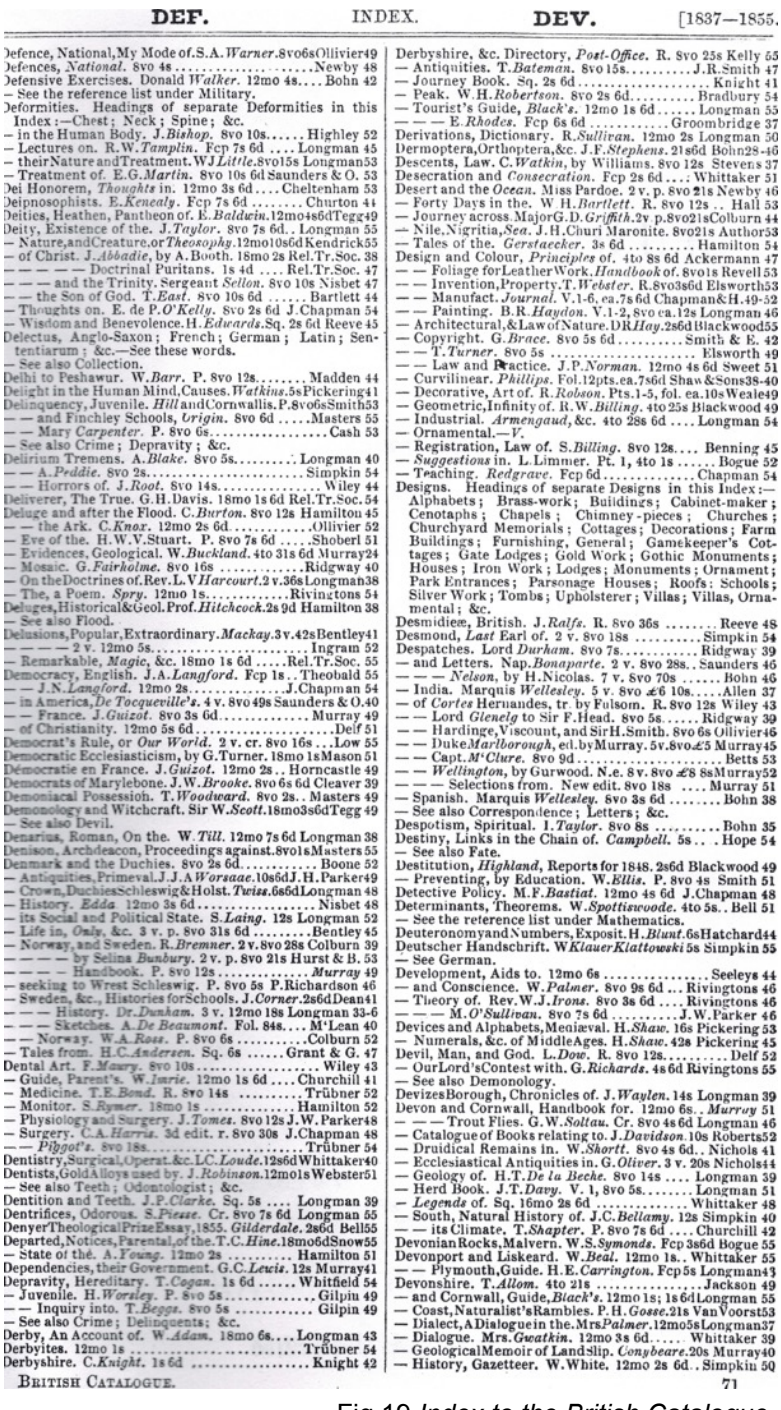
systematically in the structure of his permutated indexes.)

## Linking

Crestadoro was always efficient and in tight control of his indexes and catalogues. In his *Address* Sampson Low identifies another significant change:

> The Index for 1857 will be found to have made another step in advance, developing more fully the system henceforth to be adopted in the Annual Catalogues; and although the space allotted to each work is small, much information is compressed into that space — the reference number to the full title (to be found appended to monthly numbers of the Publishers' Circular, or to the Annual Catalogue) amply compensating for the previous brevity.

This is the forerunner of Crestadoro's principle of separating indexes from the full record describing an item, and using a number to connect them. Crestadoro's innovation in the *Index to the British Catalogue* represents a massive advance on traditional indexes and catalogues, which were little more than broad subject groupings or author or title listings, sometimes only in accessioning order. Crestadoro brought in a new mechanistic approach whose logic was suitable for the new information age, but he did this from the position of a man who knew and loved his books and wanted others to easily discover and identify them. Here is an example of Crestadoro's 1857 index, showing the dashes and the title word rotation (later on in the Manchester catalogues Crestadoro explained how the dashes worked, but it was mainly felt to be self-evident).



DEF. INDEX. DEV. [1837—1855.

Defence, National, My Mode of. S. A. *Warner*. 8vo 6s Ollivier 49
Defences, *National*. 8vo 4s ..... Newby 48
Defensive Exercises. Donald *Walker*. 12mo 4s. .. Bohn 42
– See the reference list under Military.
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Deipnosophists. E. *Kenealy*. Fcp 7s 6d ..... Churton 44
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– – – and the Trinity. Sergeant *Sellon*. 8vo 10s Nisbet 47
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– – – – 2 v. 12mo 5s. ..... Ingram 52
– Remarkable, *Magic*, &c. 18mo 1s 6d ..... Rel. Tr. Soc. 55
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– – J. N. *Langford*. 12mo 2s. ..... J. Chapman 54
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– – – History. Dr. *Dunham*. 3 v. 12mo 18s Longman 33-6
– – – Sketches. A. *De Beaumont*. Fol. 84s. .. M'Lean 40
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Fig.19 *Index to the British Catalogue*

## Article Level Information

The *Index to Current Literature* was a new publication; the first quarterly volume was published in 1859. As

well as being Editor, Crestadoro must surely have been the instigator of this innovative publication, embedding in it his strong belief that all works are equally significant, whether published as books, articles or pamphlets. Crestadoro was the first to emphasise the importance of recording articles, conference papers and pamphlets and including them as entries in catalogues.

The *Index to Current Literature* was intended as an ambitious supplement to the *British Catalogue*, as explained in the Introduction: the writer is certainly the Editor, Crestadoro:

> THIS 'INDEX' is designed to afford a ready reference to the titles of new publications, including pamphlets, and original articles of distinct literary interest contained in Magazines, Papers, etc., often equally important to literature as separate publications, but hitherto barely taken into account.

Crestadoro was well aware of how new the approach was and characteristically made his case:

> At present the object is to bring together, in as concise a form as possible, a reference to articles as necessary to be catalogued as books, but which, having no separate existence, are often lost to the persons most anxious to consult them: it is, in fact, a first attempt to place magazine articles on a par for publicity with books.[265]

According to his own report, Crestadoro worked on Sampson Low's *Index to Current Literature* to the end of 1861, but there is no trace of further volumes.

In 1859 Crestadoro published *The Art of Making Catalogues* and in this he emphasised that articles are as much works, as are books. Later, he was the first to give article level information for periodicals in a general catalogue, as exemplified in the *Catalogue of the Books in the Manchester Free Library: Reference Department*. Crestadoro anticipated exactly the value modern scientists and researchers place on this rich data. Consultation with contemporary library historians has not revealed any other innovator for incorporating this data in a general catalogue, and they concurred with my view that this is another first for Crestadoro.

## Organisational Skills

Evidence survives of Sampson Low's high opinion of his employee.

Sampson Low directly and generously acknowledges Crestadoro's impact in the *Address* to the *Index to the British Catalogue of Books published during the years 1837 to 1857 inclusive, compiled by Sampson Low*: 'having found much valuable assistance in the engagement of Mr. Crestadoro'.

Sampson Low expanded on this in the reference he supplied on 14 May 1859 for Crestadoro's application for the post of secretary to the Russell Institution:

> As applicant for the office of Secretary to the Russell Institution, it will give me much pleasure if anything I can say or do in your behalf shall tend to your benefit, and I am convinced that whatever ability, energy, and integrity are requisites I can safely take upon myself the responsibility of recommending you, and I feel assured that in any position where your peculiar faculties for arranging and cataloguing libraries can be made available your services must be appreciated. The improvements that I have been enabled to introduce into the 'British Catalogue' at your suggestion have been very generally approved of, for both simplicity of arrangement and completeness of detail; and I consider myself most fortunate in having made your acquaintance.

Clearly, Crestadoro's organisational skills in keeping a complex operation running between

concept, staff and printers, were appreciated by Sampson Low, and his 'peculiar faculties for arranging and cataloguing libraries' as described in the testimonial were real assets. ('Peculiar' meaning in Victorian usage particular rather than odd.) Later on, Crestadoro's systematic approaches delivered the miracle of the monumental catalogue for Manchester, well in time and within budget.

Crestadoro's innovations continued throughout his professional life. His achievements are evidenced by his work on Sampson Low's Index, by *The Art of Making Catalogues*, his influence on the POL catalogue, and by the printed catalogues he produced in Manchester. The Library of Congress credits him with the concept of authority control, information scientists credit him with the KWIC index, library historians with the provision of detailed supplementary title information, and it is accepted that his model of the printed index catalogue was followed by most of the first Free Libraries. To this must now be added his innovation of including articles in general catalogues.

## Sampson Low Post Crestadoro

Later on, Sampson Low modified or abandoned these approaches as the scale of what he was struggling to cover in these decades of immense book production was already overwhelming, and presumably would also have added to the size and costs of production. However, he did indicate the desirability of the permutated index, of giving access through all the key words and plans at some stage to incorporate this. For example, in 1864 he published one of those accumulations (here of 67,500 distinct works) that makes following the bibliographic relationships of his catalogues and indexes a bibliographic nightmare:

> THE ENGLISH CATALOGUE OF BOOKS PUBLISHED FROM JANUARY, 1835, TO JANUARY, 1863, COMPRISING THE CONTENTS OF THE 'LONDON' AND THE 'BRITISH' CATALOGUES. AND THE PRINCIPAL WORKS PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES OFAMERICA AND CONTINENTAL EUROPE WITH THE DATES OF PUBLICATION, IN ADDITION TO THE SIZE, PRICE, EDITION, AND PUBLISHER'S NAME.

The inclusion of dates of publication is an interesting innovation. Sampson Low specified in the Preface that he brought this in for the 1849 *British Catalogue* and the practice soon became uniformly adopted. Crestadoro clearly approved, for he highlighted date as critical information in *The Art of Making Catalogues*. Reading Sampson Low's comment that he has done this: 'in the hope of approaching more nearly to his idea of what the English standard catalogue should be', it is obvious why Sampson Low and Crestadoro worked so well together, both enthusiasts for accessible and practical catalogues.

He did not lose sight of Crestadoro's permutated index, and emphasised how well it was received: 'It is also purposed, at no very distant period to continue the Index which has already been published from 1837 to 1855, from the latter period, this Index having been found especially useful.'

Sampson Low also described in his Preface the effort that has gone into this accumulation, giving a picture of the editor's role. No wonder Crestadoro in his time with Sampson Low thought up the Lean Back chair:

> The old London Catalogue, together with the British Catalogue, has at very considerable cost been merged in the present publication; and for nearly three years past the time of the editor, and that of his assistants, has been thoroughly occupied in supplying deficiencies

> and correcting proofs. The great Catalogues of the British Museum have been carefully searched for every publication of importance not included in the two works just mentioned; and it is believed that a larger amount of information on modern English bibliography is thus brought together than has ever been presented in any similar work.

The engagement with Sampson Low forms a landmark in Crestadoro's life. Through it he obtained professional status and pioneered the permutated index that became significant in information science. Sampson Low and Crestadoro together produced the first national bibliographies. Arguably these publications were richer in coverage and approaches than the *BNB,* first produced in 1949 by the Council of the British National Bibliography, which was assimilated in 1973 into the BL.

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[259] 'The Correspondence of William Henry Fox Talbot' - foxtalbot.dmu.ac.uk

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[262] Bella Hass Weinberg, 'Predecessors of scientific indexing structures' in W. Boyd Rayward and Mary Ellen Bowden (eds) *The History and Heritage of Scientific and Technological Information Systems Proceedings of the 2002 Conference* (Medford: Information Today, 2004)

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[264] Hoerman, *Indexing and Abstracting*, p.8

[265] Sampson Low, *Index to Current Literature: comprising a reference to every book in the English Language as published, and to original literary articles of distinctive character in serial publications.* No. 1 For the Quarter Ending September 30, 1859, p.1

# Chapter Ten: The Art of Making Catalogues

> It has been said that every man thinks himself competent to drive a gig and to edit a newspaper. To this may be added 'and to catalogue books.' It is only by actual experience that the difficulty of the operation becomes apparent.[266]

## Library Catalogues in the Nineteenth Century

As the nineteenth century progressed, so did the volume and forms of publishing increase exponentially. Institutions were hard pressed to keep up with the demands from their members for all sorts of information: from patents, specifications, technical manuals to statistics, newspapers, scholarly pamphlets, scientific papers, heavy and light literature. Publishers had tried to take control of the torrent of printed output through the *Publishers' Circular* and the editor, then owner, Sampson Low.

Alternatives had to be found to traditional library catalogues, developed for private collections and fewer readers. These were basically inventory lists where the book was more important than providing approaches to discover it.

The first Free Libraries, as established under the 1850 Library Act, had to devise and deliver new catalogues that would enable readers both to request items they knew they wanted and to find new ones, by providing a guide to what a library held for a particular author or subject. Ideally, these catalogues should be printed for use at home and by other libraries, spreading information on where books were held.

By the 1860s, co-operation was developing, not just amongst the Free Libraries but also with libraries in America, with institutional libraries and with the BM. Rules for catalogues were

emerging and standards were being developed to support shared cataloguing.

The accounts of creating new catalogues share common factors. Then as now time, cost, complexity are usually underestimated, those employed to produce them often give up under the stress, committees argue and main principles are not agreed or understood, so the catalogues are delayed, left unfinished or become unsatisfactory botches.

It was Crestadoro who rescued the Manchester Free Library Committee from their embarrassing failure, over ten years, to produce a printed catalogue for the Reference Library. He had a clear vision of what was needed, exact calculations of time and cost. He brought to the task both the experience gained with Sampson Low and his understanding of the needs of readers in searching for both scholarly and technical information. His index catalogue became the model for the first Free Libraries, featuring both his KWIC index, emphasis on the title page and the author's intention, article level entry, additional notes and the separation of records from the index.

Crestadoro had explored these ideas in his pamphlet published in 1856, *The Art of Making Catalogues; or, a Method to Obtain in a Short Time a Most Perfect, Complete, and Satisfactory Printed Catalogue of the British Museum Library by a Reader Therein*.

## Helpful suggestions to Panizzi

Crestadoro was involved with Sampson Low for at least a decade and the business would have taken him on an almost daily basis to the Reading Rooms (as Crestadoro himself said in his 1859 proposal for the Lean Back chair). Being Crestadoro he could not resist entering the passionate debate over the production of its catalogue. It was regarded as a national disgrace that there was no more provision to the BM collections than disparate manuscript catalogues.

His pamphlet has to be understood in the context of what was happening at the BM: the ideas in the pamphlet are far reaching but the initial impetus was to propose a simple solution (typical Crestadoro) to an overwhelmingly complex enterprise.

Crestadoro outlined how a printed, rather than manuscript BM catalogue, might still be achieved. Over the years, the BM Trustees had dithered over whether the catalogue should be manuscript or print, wanting print but being worried about the cost. Crestadoro expands on this in the Preface:

> The present Essay inquires what these difficulties are with a view to solve the problem of their removal. It will be a source of great satisfaction to the writer if the result of his labours is the accomplishment of the greatest boon that can be conferred on literature—a really successful Printed Catalogue of its invaluable treasures.

Everyone seemed to have opinions on the BM catalogue. Crestadoro was far more expert than most, but his voice little heeded. So what was happening when Crestadoro entered the fray?

## Panizzi's Battles

In 1837, Panizzi was appointed Keeper of Printed Books at the BM and he set about the transformation of his department, undaunted by the inevitable battles and hostility. The production of a new catalogue was a special trial: he had to fight for new staff, was forced to accept the Trustees' decisions for printing the catalogue in stages instead of at completion, and was not allowed to have one editor to manage the whole enterprise. Panizzi warned that the methods used would produce errors, that it would take years to produce a good catalogue. His first suggestion as Keeper was that the plan for a printed rather than manuscript catalogue should be reviewed, putting forward four reasons against print, but he was overruled.

The interventions of the Principal Librarian, the vacillating orders of the Trustees, the internal politics and accusations all contributed to a nightmare situation for Panizzi.

The Royal Commission appointed in 1847 to review the BM, vindicated Panizzi on all fronts, deploring especially the interference of the Trustees in the catalogue.

At its conclusion in 1849, the Royal Commission put Panizzi in full charge of a manuscript catalogue to be delivered according to the rules approved in 1839. It was later decided that a printed catalogue should still be produced once the manuscript catalogue was completed. Panizzi was faced with the difficult decision of whether to start anew or to continue with the changes that the Trustees had imposed.

Panizzi was promoted to Principal Librarian in March 1856 and left the catalogue to his trusted assistant and friend, John Winter Jones. (As Chief Librarian in Manchester, Crestadoro was in frequent and cordial correspondence with Winter Jones.)

Panizzi himself was greatly relieved to be rid of direct responsibility for the general catalogue on his promotion to Principal Librarian: '"Thank God," he wrote to Lady Holland, "I shall have no more to do with that job for the future."'[267]

## The next decades of the BM Catalogue

When Crestadoro produced his *The Art of Making Catalogues* in 1856, Panizzi had moved on to his new duties but: 'The cataloguing system he had devised remained in force (with some important modifications in the 1880s) for the next 75 years.'[268]

The whole history of the General Catalogue is best followed in A.H. Chaplin's work *GK: 150 years of the General Catalogue of Printed Books in the British Museum.* Like John Hewish, A.H. Chaplin wrote from a valuable staff perspective. He was Principal Keeper of Printed Books from 1966 to 1970, starting out in that department in 1930.

In the time relevant to Crestadoro, Winter Jones covered the catalogue from 1856 to 1866, followed by Thomas Watts from 1866 to 1869, W.B. Rye from 1869 to 1875, each successively in the post of the Keeper of Printed Books. They had worked with Panizzi on the catalogue and were loyal supporters. George Bullen succeeded Rye and it was only then that the dormant issue of the print catalogue resurfaced. Priority had been given before that to keep up with new accessions. When Rye retired in 1875 they had reached the letter S.

Panizzi's new round Reading Room was opened in 1857. The folio volumes, totalling 1,761 at that stage, were placed on the bookcases specially created for them in two circles around the central desk, a Stonehenge type configuration with the folio volumes as 'heavy as paving stones'.[269] Panizzi retired in 1866 at sixty-nine years old, worn out by the scurrilous attacks on him, although cheered by the loyalty of his staff. He was succeeded, as he had hoped, by Winter Jones. The great *BM General Catalogue of Printed Books* (GK1) appeared two years after Panizzi's death in 1879 as 393 print volumes.

## Crestadoro's Proposals

The task facing Panizzi, and then Winter Jones was overwhelming, and they were not alone. As Jewett had observed: 'Not one European library, of the first class, has a complete printed catalogue, in a single work'.[270] It was Crestadoro who achieved this in 1864 with his Manchester catalogue.

In his pamphlet, Crestadoro addresses the main issues of the BM catalogue as well as providing a

cataloguing manual any librarian could follow. He details the catalogue structure, the principles for descriptions and indexing as well as a methodology for producing the printed catalogue.

Had the impossible happened and the BM Trustees adapted Crestadoro's proposals in 1856, what would have been the result? The Manchester Catalogue he produced in 1864 is one hefty volume with some 80,000 entries. Crestadoro estimated that about 800,000 entries would be needed for the BM in a total of sixty volumes.

Crestadoro was certain that the BM catalogue could be produced with his method.

He proposed a startling modern approach to the workflows. Basically, this is process engineering, breaking the tasks into transcription of the title page, translation for foreign languages and indexing, all to be covered by three separate teams. Once a number is allocated to the title page it can pass to the printer, allowing the index to be separately created. This is a very simple summary of the detailed procedures that Crestadoro outlined. He gave all the steps, identified problems and included impressive time and cost estimates. This is a confident and expert Crestadoro, working from a firm basis of experience with Sampson Low, and a rich appreciation of what catalogues can do and how best to structure them.

In all this he continually focuses on the benefit for the reader, and his style is much more relaxed than usual. In one section, 'Other Bibliographic Comments' he even addresses the reader directly as: 'Finally, if you are only searching for Bibliographical information, it is again this same address, that takes you directly to the right place and opens for you the only page of the commentary that contains the knowledge you are in search of.'

An apposite modern summary of the work is: 'an influential pamphlet on making the catalogue easier to consult.'[271]

Panizzi had produced detailed estimates and Crestadoro does the same. By proposing a scheme based on the transcription of the title page, a task of a few minutes, Crestadoro pointed out the rest can be outsourced:

> Thus, as far as time is concerned, the inventory of the whole Library would be commenced and completed in as short a period as ten transcribers could copy verbatim the title pages of all the books on one mile of shelving; the entire staff at work consisting of 160 transcribers, 16 revisers and 32 attendants.

## Charles C. Jewett

Crestadoro always acknowledged his inheritance of ideas: typically, he remarked in *The Art of Making Catalogues* that: 'It is remarkable how often the greatest advantages are the result, not of any new suggestion, but of the right application of some principle already in practice.'

Crestadoro mentioned in his Manchester correspondence[272] that he been influenced by Charles Jewett's *On the Construction of Catalogues of Libraries,*[273] published in 1853, though the first edition was circulated privately before that, in 1852. Jewett was librarian at the Smithsonian and later at the Boston Public Library and remains a revered figure in librarianship. Jewett's influence on Crestadoro is apparent in comparing the two books. Crestadoro covers similar topics, often formulates the same approach, focuses on the title information and, like Jewett, propounds the idea of a separate subject index. Both break down a formidable processing task by dealing with it on a title by title basis. However, Jewett is clear his book is intended as a technical manual with rules, examples and an explanation of the stereotyping process, electroplates for each title, that could then

promote sharing. His introductory remarks on catalogues are learned and perceptive, but unlike Crestadoro he is not looking beyond practical boundaries. His aim is a report on the construction of the Smithsonian catalogue in the hope it can enable others to cope in a critical situation.

Crestadoro may be too modest in his attribution to Jewett. In the 1876 report *Public Libraries in the United States of America*, Cutter commented on *The Art of Making Catalogues*:

> A comparison of dates makes it probable that it is independent of the American. Librarians, having similar wants, hit upon similar means to supply them. It is true, Mr. Crestadoro's pamphlet appeared two years before Mr. Jewett's dictionary catalogue, and the two points in which that differed from Mr. Poole's were both recommended by Crestadoro.[274]

Cutter devoted several pages to Crestadoro in his section of this major report, crediting him with an admirable plan for catalogues, with applying a strong subject structure of cross references in the Manchester catalogue that others did not take pains to follow.

## Structure, Content and Core

Despite the declaration of the title, *The Art of Making Catalogues* is much more than yet another opinion on the BM catalogue, which was a passionate topic for the BM Trustees, Parliament, newspapers and the general public as well as the librarians. Crestadoro's book reached way beyond these concerns and is impressive both in the breadth of its vision and in the expert practicalities of its details. The thirty-two sections range from the very specific to speculative exploration.

The text within each section is dense with ideas, practical application, references to authorities and knowledgeable exploration of concepts. It is an astonishing achievement and although there were precedents in the field, Crestadoro goes further and packs in more than any other writer before him.

## Technical Manual

*The Art of Making Catalogues* reveals practical and experienced workmanship, the exact way in which to cost, organise and produce catalogue records, indexes and what Crestadoro calls the Index of Indexes. This business like approach eventually gained him the contract to produce the catalogue for Manchester Free Libraries. Looking at *The Art of Making Catalogues* from this perspective it is clear that Crestadoro's association with Sampson Low must have started a good few years before the book was produced. It is full of examples and structures that can be related to Sampson Low's productions, from the emphasis on the transcription of the full title page to the production of the index under the different subject words.

Crestadoro refers directly to Sampson Low under his section 'Estimate of the Time, Labour and Expense required'; only a person experienced in the actual trade could produce this time and motion type of analysis:

> Since, as we have seen, the number of words which an entry in the Index consists of, is by itself always very limited; assuming a maximum of 50 letters to every entry, if printed in the type and 8vo size of Low's 'Index to the British Catalogue', at the rate of l line per entry; 100 lines per column; 2 columns per page; and 1,000 pages per volume;- and assuming as many as 4,000,000 entries or an average of 5 index-entries to every inventorial one;- the bulk of the Index will be represented by 20 volumes or less than half the bulk of the original inventory.

Crestadoro's book consists of sixty densely printed pages, divided into the short sections. It is the

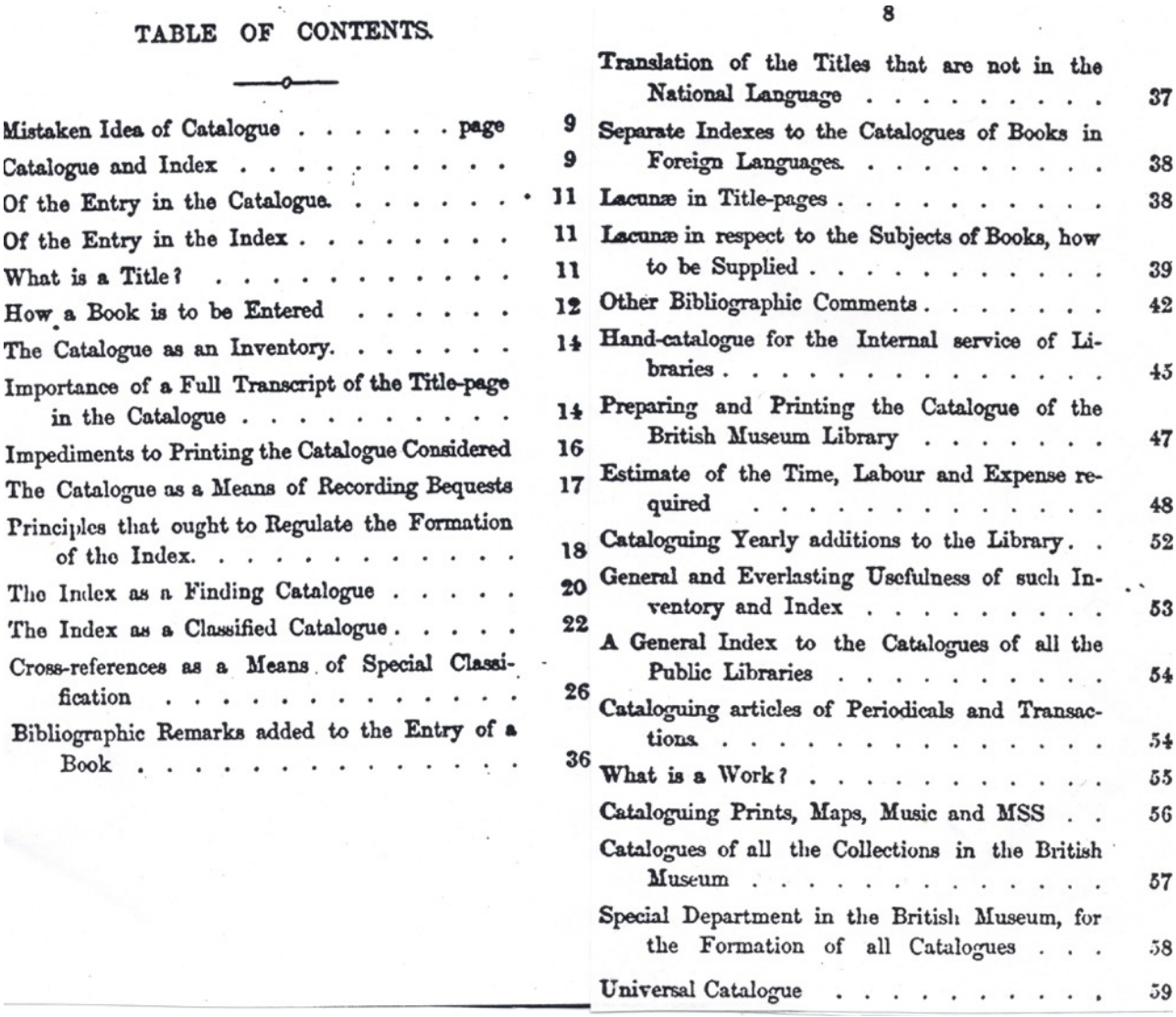

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Fig.20 *The Art of Making Catalogues* Table of Contents

most clearly written of all his works and the new librarians and cataloguers of the Free Libraries would have found strong principles to follow. As well as the principles, Crestadoro gives assurance that cost effective catalogues could be produced in a timely way, enabling readers to access the masses of new information, denied to them by inadequate catalogues, or in some cases by the total lack of catalogues. Too much is lost by lack of awareness: Crestadoro's opening words are on this key point:

> The age in which we live is distinguished by vigorous and successful cultivation of the Arts, Literature, and Science. In every civilized country, men illustrious for talent, worth and learning, are earnestly engaged in enlarging the boundaries of knowledge. But unfortunately, the vast and daily increasing results of their labour remain hidden and thus are of little or no service, from the want of some ready means of reference to them.

## Separation of the Index

Crestadoro's practical solution for timely production of catalogues was to separate the catalogue records from their alphabetical arrangements by giving access through indexes. It is a brilliant notion, simple but effective. A similar separation is fundamental to modern bibliographic databases

with each element of the description held only once and linked together by indexes.

It was not a new idea: Charles Jewett used a basic subject list as an adjunct to the alphabetical Smithsonian catalogue and described it in his report. But it was Crestadoro who invented the full permutated index that gave a subject entry to a book under all the main topics it covered, not just slotting it into one predetermined category.

Imagine a printed Argos or other mail order catalogue with no index at the back, how much browsing would you do to be sure you had found all the items you wanted? Or would Argos try to help the customer by putting all the products into alphabetical rather than categorized order? Nightmare! As Crestadoro so instinctively understood data structures hang on the relationship of indexes.

The other leap of imagination that Crestadoro then makes is that freeing up the catalogue from its alphabetical arrangement means that there can be a huge increase through the indexes in giving access to content, formerly excluded as unfeasible to cover:

> The Catalogue has no claim to be alphabetical, and its Index has no right to be exclusive, but it must embrace all sorts of reference, no matter how many or how various they may appear. The two lists cannot exchange offices, nor intrude into each other's domain with impunity; nor can either of them, without mischief, escape performing any of the duties naturally belonging to it. If such a thing as an Index is appended to the Catalogue of a Library, why should it not be a table of ALL instead of SOME only of the contents of the Catalogue?

## What is a Work

In his section 'What is a Work' Crestadoro comes close to the abstract concept of a creative work: 'a work cannot be defined as a mere synonym of an imprint'. This predates by a century and a half the core the tenets of the modern cataloguing code, Functional Requirements of Bibliographic Records (FRBR)[275].

It also logically leads to Crestadoro's innovation of treating articles, conference papers, pamphlets and tracts as works in their own right and therefore worthy of inclusion in a catalogue.

## Universality

*The Art of Making Catalogues* struck me as a remarkable book when I first encountered it, particularly in the depiction of the universal power and scope of catalogues. The core message is accessible information, which furthers an understanding and more humane world.

Crestadoro takes an imaginative leap at the end of *The Art of Making Catalogues*. The idea of a universal catalogue is, as he remarks, not a new one and he gives a review of current proposals and examples. But his scheme of a universal index is a new direction altogether – though perhaps not as 'easily undertaken' as the ever-optimistic Crestadoro suggests:

> Certainly it would be far preferable if a regular inventory could be obtained as it can be from the Library of the British Museum. When the whole question is reduced to a mere transcript of the title-pages, an UNIVERSAL CATALOGUE not merely of the books existing in our National Library, but of all the books, so far known, that have ever been printed in any language in this Country and abroad, might be easily undertaken, if England, France, Germany and Italy, would combine. There can be little doubt but that the whole civilized world would rejoice to assist in the noble undertaking.

> The whole world would thus be converted into a single Library, as it were ; all its intellectual contents inventoried:—all these inventories incorporated into one UNIVERSAL INDEX, which would then be the universal literary guide to the mental treasury of and for all mankind.

Extraordinary as this aspiration must have seemed, it was viable. In 1910, a world index was attempted in the Mundaneum project, reaching to around 12 million items recorded in the card cabinets. The Mundaneum is itself regarded as a forerunner of the Internet.

It is only in the twenty first century that global online co-operation is approaching the reality of a universal catalogue, the main proponent being OCLC with WorldCat.

Crestadoro was bolder than most, even today, in going consciously beyond the 'narrow-bounds of a Catalogue-entry'. For instance, he proposed that a record could link to reviews, translations, other library holdings or any other bibliographic information, including biographical accounts of authors. Some of this is now evidenced in major online catalogues and entries for authors.

## Envisaging the Internet

Once Crestadoro had seized upon a notion he generally took it to its extremes, a speaking tube could encircle the world, a metallic balloon could soar. He pursued his thoughts on catalogues, indexes and universal inventories of information to the ultimate, and came up with an idea that I believe was unique at the time. Crestadoro really envisaged the scope of the Internet, with all objects carrying data being captured in a universal inventory:

> The BM is perhaps the only institution in the world that combines in one national establishment a large Library and a most extensive collection of Antiquities; Medals; Coins; Minerals; Zoological and Botanical Specimens. All the various objects of these collections are as interesting to Literature, Science, and Art, as the books are themselves. They are all WORKS falling within much the same definition that Librarians have agreed on with respect to written or printed books. If it be convenient that a finding and working Catalogue should contain a joint reference to printed books, to manuscripts, to prints and drawings, it is certainly no less important, nor less conducive to the spread of knowledge, that some analogous process should afford the means of a ready reference to these articles, — the themes themselves of treatises and descriptions in books, prints, and drawings.

Another dimension of what Crestadoro envisaged is now seen in the transformation of scientific information where the actual research material itself, DNA structures, crystal structures for example, are what is sought, as well as, or even in preference to, the articles about them. Often a condition of publishing in scholarly journals or of funding is that this raw data is made available to all.

Panizzi detested both scientists (following his unfortunate experience with the Royal Society catalogue in 1832) and the clutter of the BM Natural History collection. He suceeded in getting the latter removed when the Natural History Museum was established in 1859. Macauley commented that Panizzi 'would at any time give three Mammoths for an Aldus.'[276] Panizzi was accused of neglecting the scientific collections and certainly the BM evolved as primarily humanities orientated.

Panizzi would not have regarded Crestadoro's inclusion of all objects as relevant or sympathised with the approach that all works deserve equal treatment, regardless of subject or form of publication.

## Model

Crestadoro's thoughts on the issues of cataloguing both large and small, sound startling familiar. I heard such debates on a daily basis in my working life, including the e-mail correspondence over international cataloguing codes. Crestadoro turned the theory of his pamphlet into practice with his Manchester index catalogues. These inevitably became obsolete, but the multitudinous ideas, practicalities and visions of his little pamphlet make it one of the richest works on cataloguing ever produced.

Crestadoro's model catalogue with catalogue records supported by permutated indexes represented a powerful breakthrough, enabling rapid production and multiple levels of systematic access. The rationale behind the structure as expounded in the pamphlet remains valid.

The order of the sections may not be strictly logical, but what Crestadoro delivered is both a technical cataloguing manual and a comprehensive review of the functions, structures and ultimate powers of catalogues and indexes. The slight pamphlet is in fact an astonishing work, and it is not surprising that the pioneering librarians of the first Free Libraries took it as their guide, as is clear from their correspondence with Crestadoro once he was the Chief Librarian at Manchester. Those who sought it were disappointed to find it out of print, and although Crestadoro considered a second edition he never accomplished it.

## BM Response

Crestadoro offered the *The Art of Making Catalogues* to Panizzi:[277]

> 23 New Millman St.
> Guildford St
> 2 May 1856
>
> Sir
>
> Being the writer of 'The Art of Making Catalogues of Libraries, or a method to obtain in a short time a most perfect, complete and satisfactorily presented catalogue of the British Museum Library' just published, I shall feel obliged for the information whether I may be allowed to offer a copy of the same to the Trustees of the Museum; and in case such favour is obtainable, what will be required for me to do,
>
> I am Sir
> Most respectfully
> A Crestadoro
>
> To the Principal Librarian of the British Museum

The reply of 3 May[278] is not from Panizzi but from the Chief Clerk on behalf from the Trustees:

> Sir
>
> I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter offering to the Trustees a copy of your publication 'The Art of Making Catalogues of Libraries' etc and I am to request you that if you will forward a copy of the publication to the Museum, it will be laid before the Trustees for their acceptance
>
> Thomas Butler
> Chief Clerk
>
> Mr. A. Crestadoro
> 23 New Millman St.[279]

John Hopson, the BL Archivist, commented: 'There is apparently no reference to this within the minutes of the Trustees' meetings.'[280]

The existing BL copy has a blue stamp, indicating legal deposit, so perhaps Crestadoro's own donation was lost. It would have received a yellow stamp: 'In the nineteenth century the colour of the stamping inks was standardized - red indicated purchases, gifts were stamped yellow, and copyright deposit books, blue.'[281]

Crestadoro must have pondered what Panizzi's opinion would be on *The Art of Making Catalogues,* and surely was disappointed that the great librarian did not even comment on his treatise or was inspired by it to offer him a post.

## Crestadoro's Request

As the work with Sampson Low came to an end, Crestadoro was on a quest for new employment: this fits in with his advertising as a language teacher, his enquiry to Panizzi in 1857, his application to the Russell Institution in 1859, to UCL in 1861, and to Manchester in 1862. This is also the period where he may have returned to Italy or Paris.

His letter to Panizzi, seeking work, is significant as it contains a clear statement of the exact task Crestadoro undertook for Sampson Low, as well as confirming this was the inspiration for *The Art of Making Catalogues*:

> Sir
>
> Understanding that it is the intention of the Trustees of the British Museum to commence an index to the catalogue of the Library I venture to solicit your support to an application I intend to make to obtain from the Trustees an engagement to assist in preparing it, and I beg to submit to your notice the subsequent testimonial from Messrs Sampson Low and Co of Ludgate Hill by whom I have been engaged to prepare an extensive index to their 'British Catalogue of Books' which index is now being printed and which suggested my writing and publishing a treatise on catalogues and their indexes.
>
> I have the honour to be Sir your most obedient servant
>
> A Crestadoro
>
> To A Panizzi Esquire
> Principal Librarian
> British Museum
> 36 King St Holborn
> 23th Feb 1857[282]

This letter is followed in the BM Archive by a testimonial from Sampson Low, dated 28 January 1857. P.R. Harris also noted that Crestadoro sent two similar letters, one to The Lord High Chancellor, and one to The Bishop of London, both BM Trustees.

Panizzi gave Crestadoro the courtesy of a personal reply on 27 February 1857, though it was not an encouraging one:[283]

> I beg to acknowledge your letter of 23d instant and to state in answer that I am not aware that the Trustees intend to commence an index to the Catalogue of the Library. Many years ago I suggested such a work and I hope in time to see it accomplished.

> When the time comes, and my opinion is asked, I shall not fail to give it freely to the Trustees. At present it would be premature for me to say more
>
> I have the honour etc
>
> A Panizzi
>
> A Crestadoro Esq
> 36 King St
> Holborn

## John Metcalfe's Verdict

John Metcalfe (1901-1982) was a stringent and distinguished information historian. His assessment of Crestadoro is important. Although he dismisses the idea of the link with computer science as 'arrant nonsense' he devotes three pages to *The Art of Making Catalogues* and to Crestadoro's Index Catalogue model in his influential book, *Information Retrieval, British & American, 1876-1976*.[284] Crestadoro comes out well from this scrutiny:

> Crestadoro's Art of Making Catalogs has had little exposition or criticism, but it does go more thoroughly into cataloging problems than might be assumed, as Cutter showed in his page or two on it in his PLUSA chapter. At one point Cutter called the plan admirable, but said it had, however, "one defect—its close adherence to title." Crestadoro could not get around inconsistencies of title, and in practice did not apply all the remedies he proposed, but in his thinking he was well beyond Poole and the equal, or more than equal, of Cutter himself. Axon was fuller and fairer in his Handbook of the Public Libraries of Manchester and Salford, 1877, which was partly reprinted in the Library World in 1921-2.[285]

Few have read Crestadoro's 'substantial pamphlet' as Metcalfe termed it and it is reassuring to find this assessment from such an authority.

## The Patent Office Library connection

P.R. Harris mentioned that it was well known that people used the BM Reading Room for dubious purposes but there is no documented evidence of this.[286] It is all the more exciting that one specific copy of Crestadoro's work *The Art of Making Catalogues* held originally by POL suggests a use of readers' tickets that Panizzi would certainly not have approved of.

The tale is as follows. My interest in Crestadoro was originally sparked in 2005 through involvement with the BL Science Reference Information Services (SRIS) open access collection project. In 2009 I came across this paragraph in *Rooms near Chancery Lane* by John Hewish, once a librarian at SRIS:

> The first truly published catalogue appeared in two parts, in 1857 and 1858. It was compiled by Atkinson on the system of the Italian immigrant Andrea Crestadoro (1808-1879). He had studied in the British Museum Library and became Librarian of the Manchester City Library in 1862. His *The Art of Making Catalogues of Libraries* had been published in 1856; Atkinson's copy is still in the collections. The first volume of Atkinson's catalogue is a non-alphabetical numbered inventory with some subject groupings; the second is an index to the first.[287]

Crestadoro's influence on cataloguing has always been thought to be limited to the public library sphere, to the early catalogues of the first Free Libraries. Now it appeared that his ideas were used

directly in a very important institution that merged in 1966 with the science collections of the BM to form the National Reference Library of Science and Invention, which then became BL SRIS.

In great excitement I tracked John down (a random search of the BT Directory showed a J Hewish at Crest View in London, and in this journey of odd coincidences it had to be him!). I phoned John and, although desperately ill, he was determined to talk of the past that was so important to him. He confirmed that *The Art of Making Catalogues* had indeed always been kept with the POL catalogue in the workroom at SRIS, the copy had a note attached that John had written, and he had made sure that it would not be discarded in the move to BL St. Pancras. John also suggested I contact the expert who was working on the POL catalogue, none other than Dr. Beryl Leigh who I knew from the SRIS project.. We met up and spent fruitful hours looking at the POL catalogue: Crestadoro's influence in its approaches is very apparent. I was also privileged later on to meet with John.

There is documented evidence of Crestadoro's link with POL to substantiate this anecdotal history. In 1988 John wrote an internal report *The British Library Science Reference and Information Service - the Nineteenth Century and Earlier Collection* and he gives as an appendix a passage from E. W. Hulme's *English Patent Law, its history, literature and library.* This is from Hulme's detailed and authoritative account:

> The first catalogue of the library printed in 1856 and comprising the Woodcroft collection, was stopped in the press in order that the library of the late Mr. Richard Prosser, of Birmingham, which had been sent to the Patent Office in September, 1853, but which had not been treated as the property of the Commissioners until its purchase in 1856, might be incorporated in the general catalogue of the library. In order to distinguish between these two rival collections, the edition of the catalogue published in 1857-58 was issued on the lines advocated by Crestadoro; the first part consisting of an inventorial list-the second of the general index of names and subjects. No further edition of the catalogue was printed until 1880-83, when a revised edition, arranged strictly by authors and subjects, was issued.

*DNB* does not include William Greene Atkinson, the POL Librarian, but Boase recorded him in *Modern English Biography*.[288] Atkinson had a legal background and his consequent ability to understand the convolutions of patent law would have helped his POL appointment. This is the entry in Boase:

> ATKINSON, William Greene, b. Darlington 1810; barrister M.T. 19 Nov. 1841; librarian of the Great seal patent office, London Jany. 1854 to death; prepared manuscript of catalogue of the library which was printed in 2 vols. 4. 1882-83; edited the Commissioners of patents journal Jany. 1854 to death. d. 59 Rowan road, Hammersmith 18 Sep. 1881.

It is significant that Atkinson, a librarian representing the interests of the scientific and technical community, should have picked up on the pragmatic new approaches offered by Crestadoro, perfect for the needs of the time.

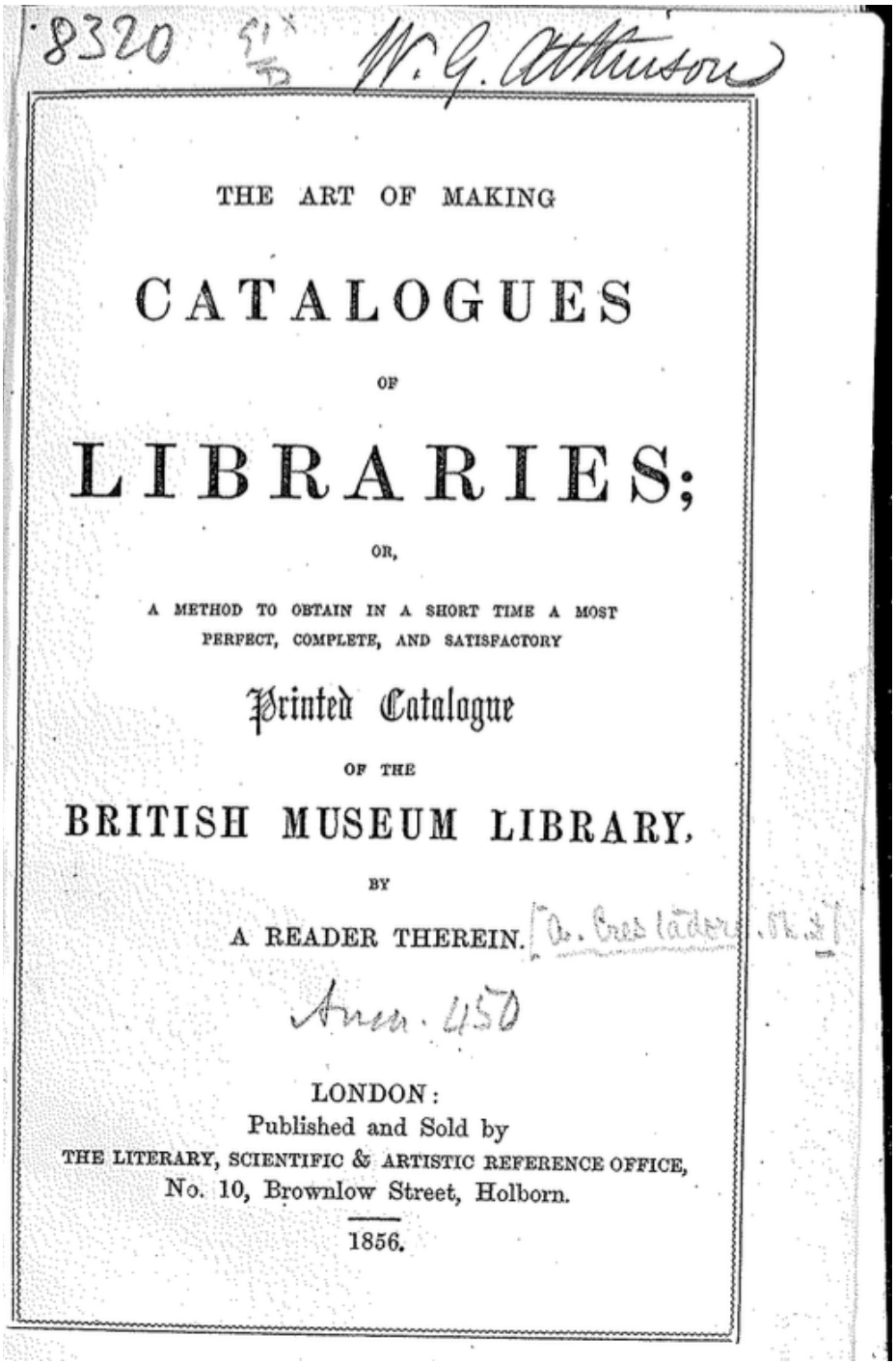
## Discovery of the missing copy

Traditionally, the copy of *The Art of Making Catalogues* used by Atkinson in compiling the first POL catalogue of 1857 and 1858, was kept with the Catalogue in the warren of 25 Southampton Row, later demolished and replaced by new purpose built offices and rooms at the same address. POL eventually became SRIS, and Dr. Beryl Leigh confirmed John Hewish's statement that the Catalogue and Crestadoro's book were always kept together in the Director's office.

Despite the care of John Hewish, *The Art of Making Catalogues* went astray after the move from the 25 Southampton Row home (of nearly 150 years residence) to the BL St Pancras in June 1999. In 2009 a colleague, Matthew Barker, whom I had told of its history, rediscovered it in the POL duplicates stored at BL Boston Spa. John Hewish's note had disappeared. The copy was reunited with the first POL Catalogue and I wrote a replacement note. I was glad we were able to tell John before he died in January 2010 that the copy had been finally retrieved.

## Crestadoro's Influence on Atkinson: Structure

The copy is signed front and back by W.G. Atkinson and his pencil notes are still apparent.


8320 W. G. Atkinson

THE ART OF MAKING

CATALOGUES

OF

LIBRARIES;

OR,

A METHOD TO OBTAIN IN A SHORT TIME A MOST PERFECT, COMPLETE, AND SATISFACTORY

Printed Catalogue

OF THE

BRITISH MUSEUM LIBRARY.

BY

A READER THEREIN.

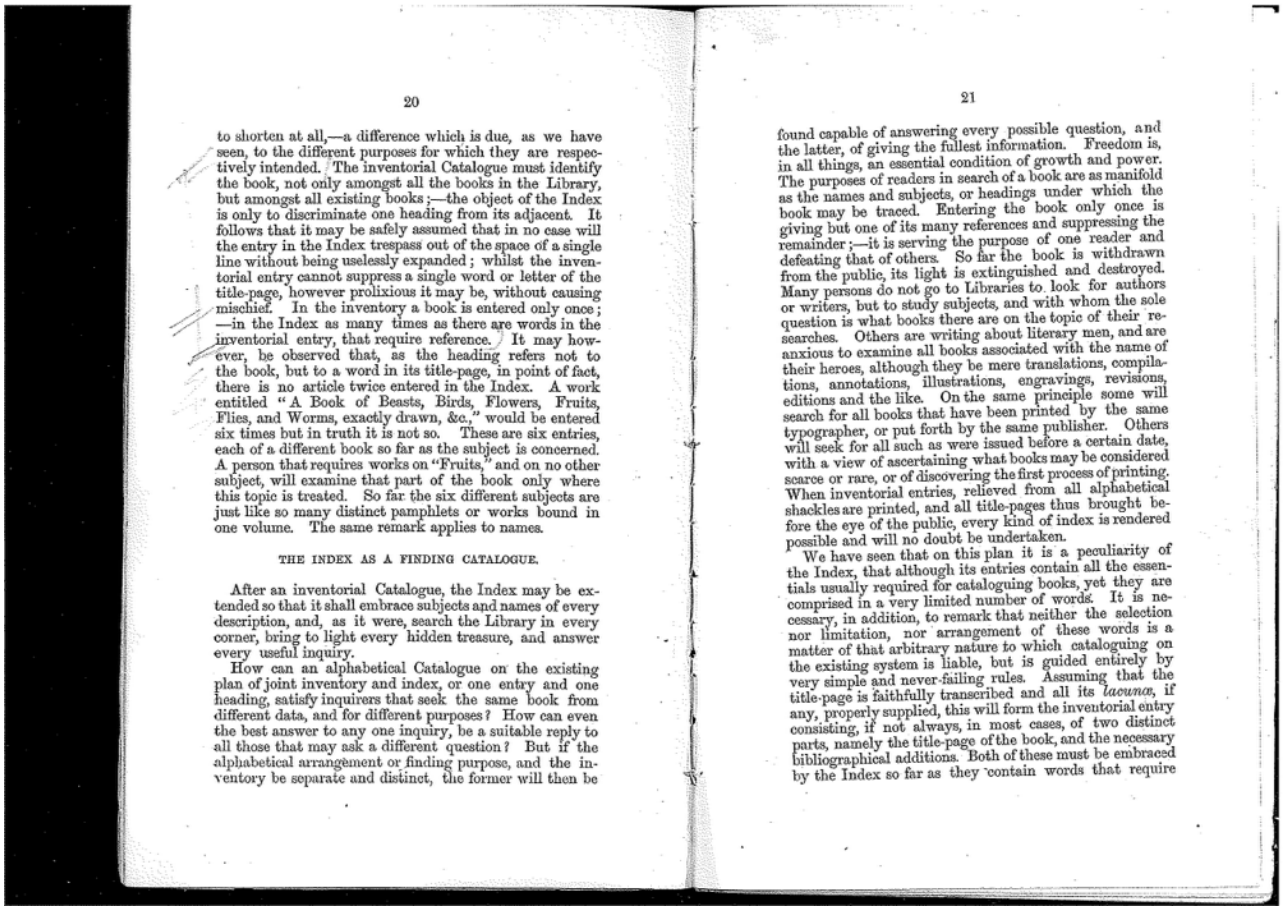
Ames. 450

LONDON:
Published and Sold by
THE LITERARY, SCIENTIFIC & ARTISTIC REFERENCE OFFICE,
No. 10, Brownlow Street, Holborn.

1856.

Fig.21 *The Art of Making Catalogues* Cover

Atkinson drew lines against sections which were of particular importance to him.



20

to shorten at all,—a difference which is due, as we have seen, to the different purposes for which they are respectively intended. The inventorial Catalogue must identify the book, not only amongst all the books in the Library, but amongst all existing books;—the object of the Index is only to discriminate one heading from its adjacent. It follows that it may be safely assumed that in no case will the entry in the Index trespass out of the space of a single line without being uselessly expanded; whilst the inventorial entry cannot suppress a single word or letter of the title-page, however prolixious it may be, without causing mischief. In the inventory a book is entered only once; —in the Index as many times as there are words in the inventorial entry, that require reference. It may however, be observed that, as the heading refers not to the book, but to a word in its title-page, in point of fact, there is no article twice entered in the Index. A work entitled "A Book of Beasts, Birds, Flowers, Fruits, Flies, and Worms, exactly drawn, &c." would be entered six times but in truth it is not so. These are six entries, each of a different book so far as the subject is concerned. A person that requires works on "Fruits," and on no other subject, will examine that part of the book only where this topic is treated. So far the six different subjects are just like so many distinct pamphlets or works bound in one volume. The same remark applies to names.

THE INDEX AS A FINDING CATALOGUE.

After an inventorial Catalogue, the Index may be extended so that it shall embrace subjects and names of every description, and, as it were, search the Library in every corner, bring to light every hidden treasure, and answer every useful inquiry.

How can an alphabetical Catalogue on the existing plan of joint inventory and index, or one entry and one heading, satisfy inquirers that seek the same book from different data, and for different purposes? How can even the best answer to any one inquiry, be a suitable reply to all those that may ask a different question? But if the alphabetical arrangement or finding purpose, and the inventory be separate and distinct, the former will then be

21

found capable of answering every possible question, and the latter, of giving the fullest information. Freedom is, in all things, an essential condition of growth and power. The purposes of readers in search of a book are as manifold as the names and subjects, or headings under which the book may be traced. Entering the book only once is giving but one of its many references and suppressing the remainder;—it is serving the purpose of one reader and defeating that of others. So far the book is withdrawn from the public, its light is extinguished and destroyed. Many persons do not go to Libraries to look for authors or writers, but to study subjects, and with whom the sole question is what books there are on the topic of their researches. Others are writing about literary men, and are anxious to examine all books associated with the name of their heroes, although they be mere translations, compilations, annotations, illustrations, engravings, revisions, editions and the like. On the same principle some will search for all books that have been printed by the same typographer, or put forth by the same publisher. Others will seek for all such as were issued before a certain date, with a view of ascertaining what books may be considered scarce or rare, or of discovering the first process of printing. When inventorial entries, relieved from all alphabetical shackles are printed, and all title-pages thus brought before the eye of the public, every kind of index is rendered possible and will no doubt be undertaken.

We have seen that on this plan it is a peculiarity of the Index, that although its entries contain all the essentials usually required for cataloguing books, yet they are comprised in a very limited number of words. It is necessary, in addition, to remark that neither the selection nor limitation, nor arrangement of these words is a matter of that arbitrary nature to which cataloguing on the existing system is liable, but is guided entirely by very simple and never-failing rules. Assuming that the title-page is faithfully transcribed and all its *lacunæ*, if any, properly supplied, this will form the inventorial entry consisting, if not always, in most cases, of two distinct parts, namely the title-page of the book, and the necessary bibliographical additions. Both of these must be embraced by the Index so far as they contain words that require

Fig.22 *The Art of Making Catalogues* Index page

Atkinson followed the radical structure Crestadoro recommended for a catalogue, cutting the Gordian knot of catalogue production by separating the 'inventorial' records from the index. The inventorial records contain the full description of an item and would now be termed bibliographic records or metadata. Atkinson issued the POL catalogue as two volumes, separating these functions.

Following Crestadoro's model, the inventorial records in POL Volume 1 are in accession number not alphabetical order: the index provides the key link through the number. As Crestadoro explained in his pamphlet the 'mischievous influence of the word Alphabetical' is at the root of the difficulties in ever completing a catalogue, especially on the scale of the BM, which he stated was increasing at a rate of 20,000 volumes per annum. Crestadoro devised a method that meant work could progress without waiting for all the bibliographic or inventorial records to be complete and then sorted alphabetically. (He had to produce alphabetically ordered catalogues in Manchester but did sneak one through towards the end of his career.)

## Other Crestadoro Features

Atkinson's highlighting of Crestadoro's text can be directly related to other features he developed in the first POL catalogue.

Atkinson put a heavy pencil line against the section on full transcription of the title page, and this

explains a unique feature of POL catalogue, Volume 1. This feature is the full recording of the information given on the title page, even including any quotations. As far as I am aware, no other catalogue has ever recorded the quotations on title pages in the bibliographic record. This inclusion must reflect Crestadoro's belief in the critical importance of every scrap of information on the title page though he himself never went as far as quotations or mottoes. Indeed he specifically excluded them in his pamphlet.

Crestadoro's insistence in his pamphlet on the need to treat all works as separate entities, however published, influenced Atkinson in his inclusion of details of multi-volume works.

The index in Volume 2 follows Crestadoro's precepts, though not to the extent of a full KWIC index. Atkinson used a main keyword from a title to give an entry, together with author names and subject headings built up as Crestadoro suggested from clusters of topics, an 'Index to the Index'.

## Authorised Headings

Crestadoro is given credit in some library literature as being the first to think of standard or authorised name headings, ensuring a person was entered in the catalogue under one name with cross references from any variants.

His use of title keywords for headings is not seen as one of his 'firsts', as the heading is not as thoroughly structured or 'authorised' as those proposed by Charles Jewett and established by Charles Cutter. These formed the basis of the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), still in international use today. Here is a typical comparison, looking at Cutter's use of a uniform heading:

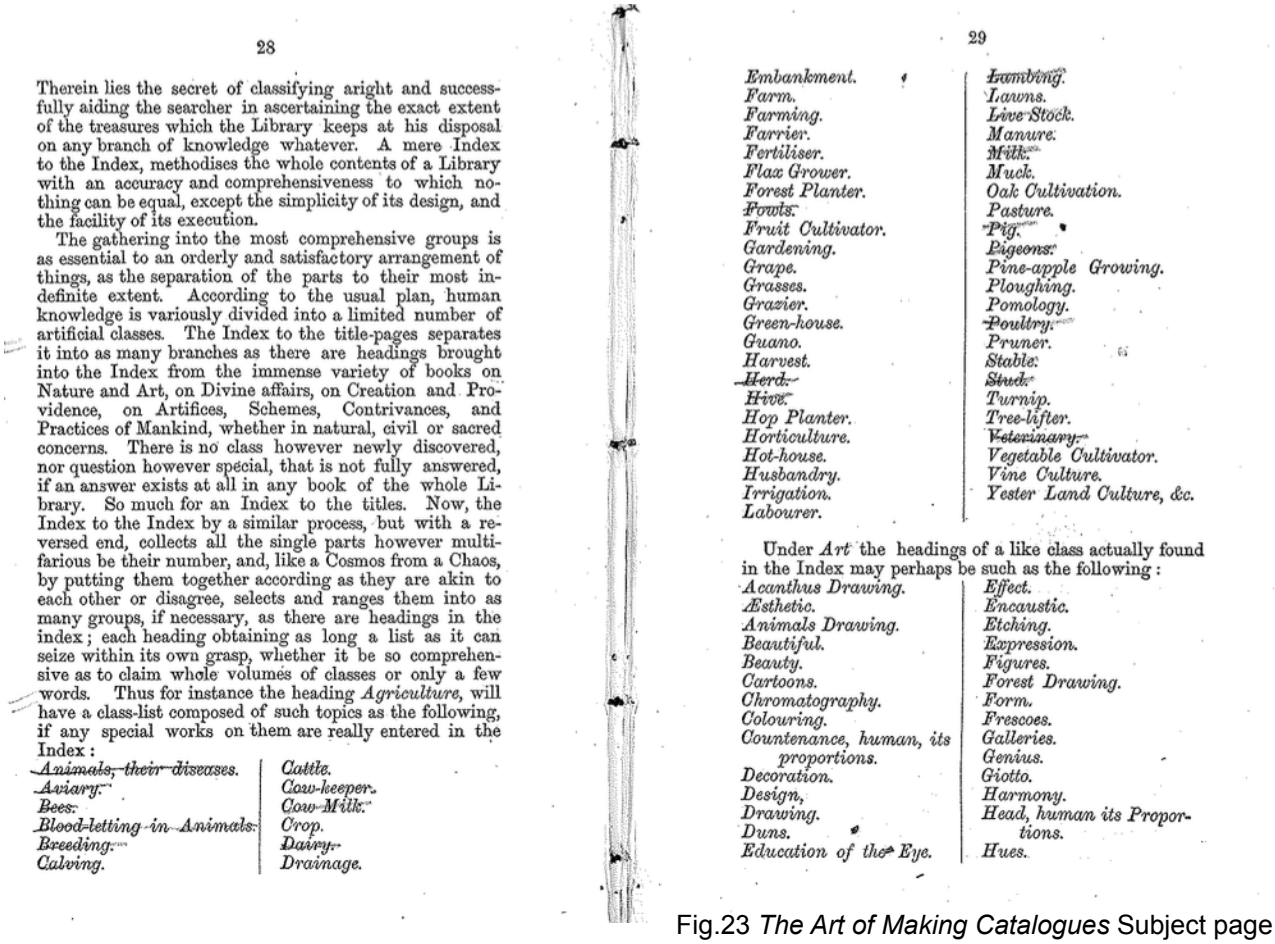
> Cutter embraced this principle because it overcame the scattering of items on the same subject caused by the use of whatever words the author used, a system espoused by Andrea Crestadoro in his 1856 pamphlet 'The Art of Making Catalogues.'[289]

However, Crestadoro in *The Art of Making Catalogues* was clearly developing his thoughts on how to guide the reader effectively to the subject required. This was through full or authorised subject headings in the inventory with links through to other terms via an Index of Indexes or class lists:

> Thus the word Medicine, will collect as appertinent to this science, a greater number of headings than the word Midwifery, amongst which, the word Midwifery itself will occur. In its turn this last word will be attended by comparatively a much shorter class-list, as Abortion; Accoucheur; Child-birth; Labour; Parturition; Placenta; Haemorrhage; Post-partum; Obstetric; &c., and such like topics belonging to this special class. These lists will not contain all the possible headings that belong to the classes they represent, but only such as actually exist in the Index, so far as there are in the Library works on the subjects to which they refer.

Nor did Crestadoro rule out intervention where the information from the work was insufficient to fully describe it or to provide adequate headings.

Atkinson employed all of Crestadoro's methods in using class lists, extensive cross-references and authorised headings. His copy of *The Art of Making Catalogues* illustrates his selection from the sample class lists Crestadoro drew up.



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Therein lies the secret of classifying aright and successfully aiding the searcher in ascertaining the exact extent of the treasures which the Library keeps at his disposal on any branch of knowledge whatever. A mere Index to the Index, methodises the whole contents of a Library with an accuracy and comprehensiveness to which nothing can be equal, except the simplicity of its design, and the facility of its execution.

The gathering into the most comprehensive groups is as essential to an orderly and satisfactory arrangement of things, as the separation of the parts to their most indefinite extent. According to the usual plan, human knowledge is variously divided into a limited number of artificial classes. The Index to the title-pages separates it into as many branches as there are headings brought into the Index from the immense variety of books on Nature and Art, on Divine affairs, on Creation and Providence, on Artifices, Schemes, Contrivances, and Practices of Mankind, whether in natural, civil or sacred concerns. There is no class however newly discovered, nor question however special, that is not fully answered, if an answer exists at all in any book of the whole Library. So much for an Index to the titles. Now, the Index to the Index by a similar process, but with a reversed end, collects all the single parts however multifarious be their number, and, like a Cosmos from a Chaos, by putting them together according as they are akin to each other or disagree, selects and ranges them into as many groups, if necessary, as there are headings in the index; each heading obtaining as long a list as it can seize within its own grasp, whether it be so comprehensive as to claim whole volumes of classes or only a few words. Thus for instance the heading *Agriculture*, will have a class-list composed of such topics as the following, if any special works on them are really entered in the Index:

*Animals, their diseases.*
*Aviary.*
*Bees.*
*Blood-letting in Animals.*
*Breeding.*
*Calving.*
*Cattle.*
*Cow-keeper.*
*Cow-Milk.*
*Crop.*
*Dairy.*
*Drainage.*

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*Embankment.*
*Farm.*
*Farming.*
*Farrier.*
*Fertiliser.*
*Flax Grower.*
*Forest Planter.*
*Fowls.*
*Fruit Cultivator.*
*Gardening.*
*Grape.*
*Grasses.*
*Grazier.*
*Green-house.*
*Guano.*
*Harvest.*
*Herd.*
*Hive.*
*Hop Planter.*
*Horticulture.*
*Hot-house.*
*Husbandry.*
*Irrigation.*
*Labourer.*
*Lambing.*
*Lawns.*
*Live Stock.*
*Manure.*
*Milk.*
*Muck.*
*Oak Cultivation.*
*Pasture.*
*Pig.*
*Pigeons.*
*Pine-apple Growing.*
*Ploughing.*
*Pomology.*
*Poultry.*
*Pruner.*
*Stable.*
*Stud.*
*Turnip.*
*Tree-lifter.*
*Veterinary.*
*Vegetable Cultivator.*
*Vine Culture.*
*Yester Land Culture, &c.*

Under *Art* the headings of a like class actually found in the Index may perhaps be such as the following:

*Acanthus Drawing.*
*Æsthetic.*
*Animals Drawing.*
*Beautiful.*
*Beauty.*
*Cartoons.*
*Chromatography.*
*Colouring.*
*Countenance, human, its proportions.*
*Decoration.*
*Design.*
*Drawing.*
*Duns.*
*Education of the Eye.*
*Effect.*
*Encaustic.*
*Etching.*
*Expression.*
*Figures.*
*Forest Drawing.*
*Form.*
*Frescoes.*
*Galleries.*
*Genius.*
*Giotto.*
*Harmony.*
*Head, human its Proportions.*
*Hues.*

Fig.23 *The Art of Making Catalogues* Subject page

The revised edition of the POL catalogue in 1888 dropped the structure and merely had entries for authors and subjects. Presumably, these subjects were partially derived from the Atkinson headings following some of Crestadoro's categories, as given as examples in his pamphlet. These eventually would have found their way into the SRIS LC structure devised by E.W. Hulme, the very SRIS scheme that was my task to terminate and replace with Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC). As already related, it was through this project that I first came across Crestadoro via Brown's dismissive remarks, but not for a few years later did I discover the practical workings of *The Art of Making Catalogues* in the first POL catalogue.

## Printed Catalogues

Crestadoro makes the telling point in his pamphlet that: 'It has been stated that printed Catalogues of Libraries have not sold. This only proves that they have been so framed as to be of little or no service.'

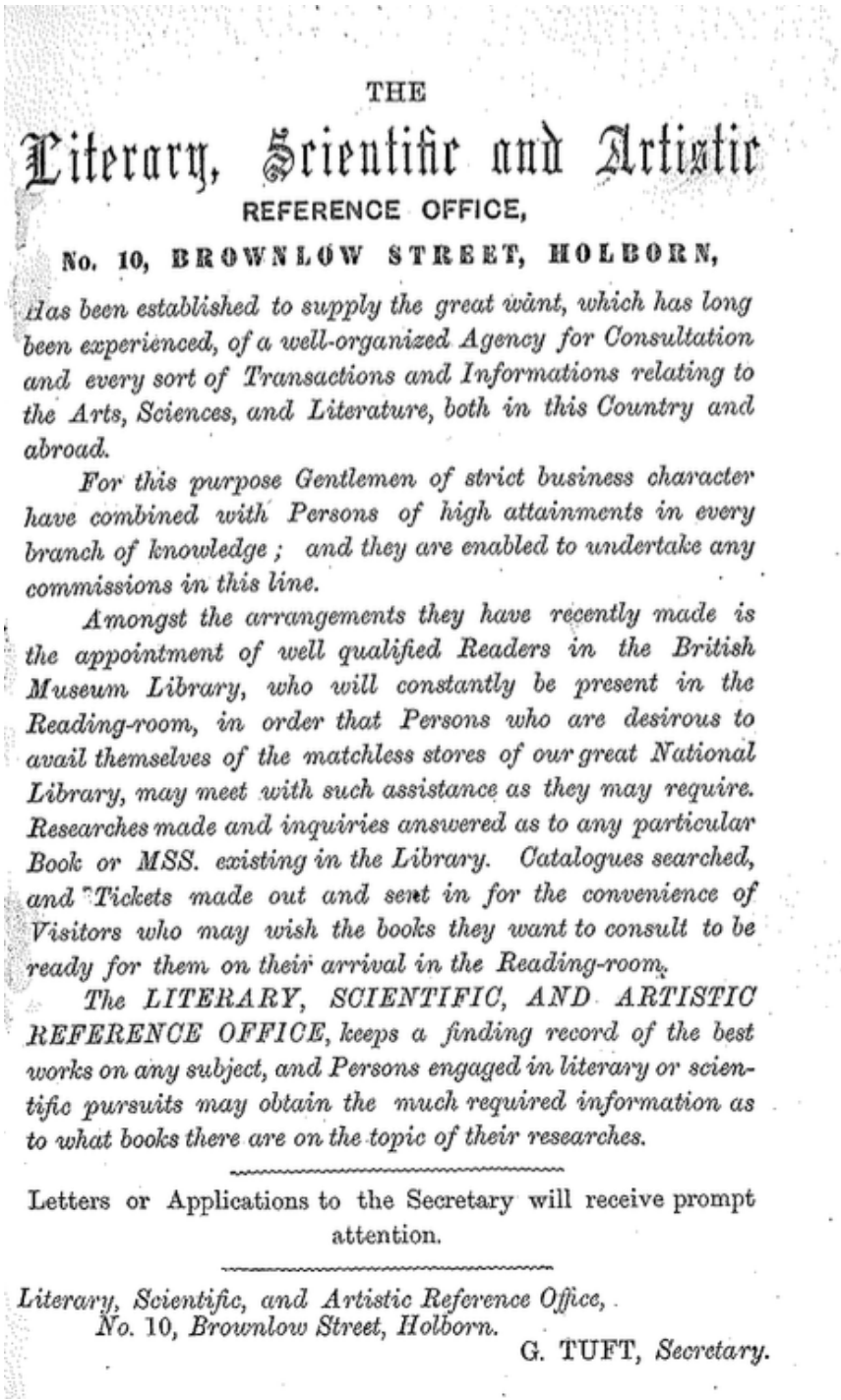
The success of his printed Manchester catalogues proves Crestadoro certainly framed them correctly, the evidence is there in the sales and distribution recorded by the Manchester Free Library Committee. The POL catalogue was printed by Eyre and Spottiswoode and presumably was purchased by inventors.

The question remains as to whether Atkinson knew Crestadoro and consulted with him. If not, did Crestadoro ever realise his ideas had been made flesh in the POL catalogue? With his work for Sampson Low and his patents he must surely have visited POL regularly.

Together with his application for the cataloguing contract at Manchester Free Libraries in 1862, Crestadoro supplied copies of *The Art of Making Catalogues* and *The British Catalogue*. Yet he made no mention of the POL Catalogue, the very first catalogue to follow the model described in *The Art of Making Catalogues*. The conclusion must be that he was not aware of it.

## Inside Matter in Atkinson's Copy

I made an exciting discovery from an introductory insert surviving in Atkinson's copy of *The Art of Making Catalogues*.



THE

Literary, Scientific and Artistic

REFERENCE OFFICE,

No. 10, BROWNLOW STREET, HOLBORN,

*Has been established to supply the great want, which has long been experienced, of a well-organized Agency for Consultation and every sort of Transactions and Informations relating to the Arts, Sciences, and Literature, both in this Country and abroad.*

*For this purpose Gentlemen of strict business character have combined with Persons of high attainments in every branch of knowledge; and they are enabled to undertake any commissions in this line.*

*Amongst the arrangements they have recently made is the appointment of well qualified Readers in the British Museum Library, who will constantly be present in the Reading-room, in order that Persons who are desirous to avail themselves of the matchless stores of our great National Library, may meet with such assistance as they may require. Researches made and inquiries answered as to any particular Book or MSS. existing in the Library. Catalogues searched, and Tickets made out and sent in for the convenience of Visitors who may wish the books they want to consult to be ready for them on their arrival in the Reading-room.*

*The LITERARY, SCIENTIFIC, AND ARTISTIC REFERENCE OFFICE, keeps a finding record of the best works on any subject, and Persons engaged in literary or scientific pursuits may obtain the much required information as to what books there are on the topic of their researches.*

Letters or Applications to the Secretary will receive prompt attention.

*Literary, Scientific, and Artistic Reference Office,*
*No. 10, Brownlow Street, Holborn.*

G. TUFT, *Secretary.*

Fig.24 *The Art of Making Catalogues* Front matter

Librarians were desperate for advice on compiling catalogues and *The Art of Making Catalogues* arrived at just the right time. It was much appreciated as a guide in the new Free Libraries, a forerunner of all those cataloguing manuals, commentaries and studies that have poured out ever since. The pamphlet winged its way into libraries across the world and different copies have now been digitised or reprinted.

But the POL copy is possibly unique in that it still retains the front matter. Crestadoro may well have removed the risky page from the copy he presented to the BM, but if not it would have been taken out in processing. Dr. Beryl Leigh pointed out that SRIS practice was to keep any extra matter in books and bind it in: how very perceptive, for any scrap of bibliographic information is valuable. This unusual SRIS approach of conserving such ephemera means this fascinating notice had survived.

The Literary, Scientific, and Artistic Reference Office never published another work and its main remit, according to this advertisement, was that of an information agent, a very early example of such commercial services. The second part of what they offer is equally enterprising if rather dodgy, the use of readers tickets for visiting scholars:

P. R. Harris commented:

> Thank you for sending me a copy of the 'Art of making catalogues' which turned up in the POL collections. The advert for the Literary, Scientific and Artistic Reference Office is intriguing. There were of course always readers who carried out paid research for others in the Reading Room. They were more common in the past when a lot of people were trying to scratch a living on the fringes of literary life, and were regular attendants in the Reading Room. The Literary, Scientific and Artistic Reference Office is the only example that I have ever come across of an attempt to organize a body of paid researchers in the Reading Room.[290]

It is not clear exactly what service Crestadoro was offering. P.R. Harris believes he operated within an acceptable boundary:

> I do not think that the Literary, Scientific and Artistic Reference Office was offering to provide readers' tickets (i.e. admission passes to the Reading Room). Panizzi would certainly have disapproved of that. I think however that the offer was to fill in request slips for books and submit these in advance to the British Museum so that when the persons who wished to see these books arrived in the Reading Room, the relevant items would be waiting in reserve for them. There would have been no official objection to this.[291]

Crestadoro struggled in his early years in London to make a living. He tried inventions, tuition and indexing, and here he seems to have invented the first library information agency. For surely the secretary of this fine sounding office, situated in a narrow back street of Holborn by Jockey's Field, a certain G. Tuft, is a play on Crestadoro/Crest of Gold?/Golden Tuft? There is certainly no further trace of that gentleman's existence and it appears that no one else has ever borne the surname 'Tuft'.

John Metcalfe may have come across another copy that included this front matter for in his assessment of *The Art of Making Catalogues* he also suggests that Crestadoro: 'could well have been the publishing agency and have been attempting to establish himself as a consultant.'[292]

## Tainted by Trade

Did Panizzi ever read his compatriot's pamphlet? There is no record that he acknowledged it. The link with Sampson Low and association with trade might not have helped promote Crestadoro to the gentlemen of the BM.

There is a difference in how librarianship developed in the USA and the UK in its relationship to the book trade. In the USA, both have traditionally been closely associated in the development of librarianship and specifically with catalogues and indexes. This partnership may have been prevented from flourishing in the UK by snobbish attitudes to trade. As Warren Boyd Rayward neatly commented: 'In Great Britain, one gathers, the trade, if it called upon the Library Association or the British Museum, both of which were generally absorbed in antiquarian endeavours, took off its cap and used the service stairs.'[293]

This has changed in the later twentieth century: librarians and publishers co-operate fully in facing

the transformations of the digital age.

There are grounds here for a full study but I would contend that there was a period before the profession fully evolved where the librarians of the new Free Libraries were happy to follow whatever worked, and that was largely Crestadoro's pragamatic approach with its roots in the book trade.

Although librarians mixed and co-operated through the LA, there were deep divisions which led to later splits. This was reflected in the cataloguing approaches. User access drove Crestadoro and the first librarians of the Free Libraries whilst the BM and academic libraries gave priority to the scholarly description of the individual items.

The difference was further marked by the adoption of DDC by the Free Libraries. Manchester, under Crestadoro, was the first to implement this American classification.[294] In the UK, DDC remained mainly associated with public libraries. Until recent times the various libraries that became the BL had their own classification systems. The two worlds were largely separate.

It is not surprising that Crestadoro, with his book trade and reader focused approach, did not find Panizzi, the Trustees or other BM staff, paying much attention to *The Art of Making Catalogues*.

## Crestadoro's Italian reputation

Agnese Galeffi teaches cataloguing and classification at the Vatican School of Library Science. In 2009 she published an article *Biographical and Cataloguing Common Ground: Panizzi and Lubetzky, Kindred Spirits separated by a century*.[295] Knowing that Lubetzky claimed Crestadoro as an influence, I contacted Agnese Galeffi to ask if she had heard of him. She replied immediately:

> About your research: I know Crestadoro. In Italy we are deeply involved in historical aspects of cataloging theory. If you read Italian (or if you know someone who can help you) in the 10th volume of "Storia delta bibliografia" written by Alfredo Serrai (probably the most important expert in this field in Italy) at pages 971-983, you'll find a very interesting chapter about Crestadoro.[296]

## Alfredo Serrai

Alfredo Serrai is an eminent Italian scholar and librarian. In *Storia delta bibliografia*[297] he identifies twelve main contributors to bibliographic development in the Anglo-Saxon world (anglosassoni). Amongst these twelve are six who would either have known or met each other: from America, Melvil Dewey and Charles Ammi Cutter, and from England, Panizzi, Edward Edwards and Crestadoro.

Alfredo Serrai devotes thirteen pages to Crestadoro and *The Art of Making Catalogues*. He gives lengthy extracts of the most important sections of Crestadoro's texts with accompanying commentaries in Italian, picking up as I had on his cataloguing of articles, the definition of a work, the concept of a universal catalogue as well as the new ideas on cataloguing structure and use of the title page. Alfredo Serrai criticises Crestadoro for a degree of naïvety and lack of professional library experience. He is particularly hard on Crestadoro's assumption that title words are sufficient to represent the contents of a work (in fairness, Crestadoro did not just say this but knew in some cases there would need to be supplementary terms added by the cataloguer).

He refers to Hans Peter Luhn's debt to Crestadoro: the mechanised device he created at IBM on punch cards with the words from the titles forming a central column, preceded and followed by the rest of the title. But he acknowledges it is not Crestadoro's fault that since then automation has led

people to use crude shortcuts in retrieval instead of the traditional structured subject approaches (presumably referring to Googlisation).

Alfredo Serrai singles out for praise Crestadoro's flexibility of mind, lateral thinking would be a closer term, and his way of moving from imaginative hypotheses to new solutions. He believes Crestadoro proposed a logical cataloguing system more rigorous, more coherent and more penetrating than traditional approaches, giving as an example the insistence on transcription of titles in full. He goes as far as seeing a stroke of genius in some of this, though still aware of the weaknesses:

> Crestadoro has struck an intelligent blow - but only abstractly, rather than concretely--in confronting how the Index classifies things. Having banished the pretensions of anyone who wants to erect a system of classification - documentary taxonomies defeat and annul each other all the time - Crestadoro affirms that the Index itself, on its own account, in being further elaborated, ends up being transformed into a sort of universal encyclopaedia.[298]

Another significant point that Alfredo Serrai picks up is Crestadoro's analysis of the diversity of user needs in searching, and designing an operational framework that would maximize meeting these needs. In fact giving the widest range of hooks to the information content of the work.

Alfredo Serrai sees that technological advances would be needed to realize Crestadoro's imaginative visions and goals but that Crestadoro's expression of them was fresh, unusual, substantially rational and operationally sound, as information scientists have since found.

Like P.R. Harris, Alfredo Serrai surmises that Panizzi would have dismissed the pamphlet, even if he read it all. The BM catalogue was too entangled an issue for any new start to be made, but certainly the Crestadoro model may have served to cut the Gordian knot as it did in Manchester, at least from the point of view of getting something practical and printed out to the users:

> Panizzi would have got rid of Crestadoro's project, with a shrug of the shoulders, deeming it unworthy of further consideration: but hidden within the wrinkles of the programme, however puerile in some respects, are some logical perceptions and new categories that are anything but crude and already taken for granted. It is worthwhile, therefore, to pause at this point, furnishing a brief account of the solutions that have been proposed in the programme.[299]

## Carlo Revelli

Searching further I discovered another distinguished Italian scholar of cataloguing who has paid attention to Crestadoro.

In his classic text *Il Catalogo per Soggetti,*[300] Carlo Revelli gives two pages to Crestadoro and *The Art of Making Catalogues,* looking at his ideas in the context of an earlier bibliographer Adrien Baillet and of the architect Leopoldo della Santa. I had heard of Adrien Baillet, a late seventeenth-century French scholar and librarian who created a catalogue consisting of a main classified part and a subject index, and he is occasionally mentioned as a possible inspiration for Crestadoro. But I only knew Leopoldo della Santa (1772-1827) as the Italian architect who first created the trigonometry of library space – the separation of reading rooms, stocks and offices.

Carlo Revelli refers to a pamphlet written by Leopoldo della Santa, *Della Costruzione e del Regolamento di una pubblica universal biblioteca.* I consulted della Santa's work and found it

interesting that he proposed a form of dictionary catalogue.

I also came across this piece about della Santa:

> Most famous of the early tracts on the subject was Leopoldo della Santa's Della Costruzione e del Regolamento di una pubblica universal biblioteca (1816). He stressed the importance of cataloguing, security and surveillance, clarified the role of the reference librarian in relation to the reading public, called for the elimination of high bookcases necessitating ladders, and proposed, for the first time, a physical separation of reading room from book storage space.[301]

This is fascinating, for as well as the cataloguing context, Crestadoro was known for his unusual views on the role of the reference librarian. Crestadoro also advised removing high bookcases and ladders as they proved a problem for women employed in the Manchester libraries. It would look as if this little pamphlet had been a substantial source of inspiration for Crestadoro. It is also interesting to see the link to Panizzi, who followed the triple architecture proposed by Leopoldo della Santa in creating the round reading room, with central catalogues and staff workspace and the book stacks outside.

Both Panizzi and Crestadoro owed much to this pamphlet by an Italian architect, looking at all aspects of design and function in the library space.

## Reputation

Crestadoro had remarkable impact on Sampson Low's publications, on the POL catalogue, and on the Free Libraries' catalogues. His pamphlet and advice was much sought after: he became a noted expert.

Ralph Thomas was an antiquarian bookseller and bibliophile who admired Crestadoro and approved of the Manchester Reference Library Catalogue, apart from treatment of anonymous works. As he wrote to Axon in 1871: 'I agree with Dr. Crestadoro in everything else'.[302] Like many others, he hoped more copies of *The Art of Making Catalogues* would be made available, and that Crestadoro would write further studies on libraries. He also mentioned that Mr. Jamieson, who had recently become librarian at the prestigious Advocates Library in Edinburgh, was only afraid of one person as a rival for the post, Dr. Crestadoro. Mr. Jamieson was relived that Crestadoro did not apply.

Crestadoro, along with Jewett, Charles Cutter, and Panizzi formed the ideas that became part of the twentieth century international cataloguing code, Anglo American Cataloguing Rules (AACR), and now its replacement FRBR.

Jewett had met Panizzi at the BM in 1845 and been impressed by his rules, especially the ones devised by Panizzi rather than those finally approved by the Trustees, and adopted many into his own cataloguing practice. Cutter and Crestadoro met through the early LA and were aware of each other's approaches. So both directly and indirectly these pioneers linked together in their lives, as well as their ideas informing the modern context of information science.

Although obscure, Crestadoro does cling onto his position in the evolution of librarianship. This slide is from Wilmer Arturo Moyano Grimaldo at the University of Columbia who places him amongst other pioneers and tells his students about him:

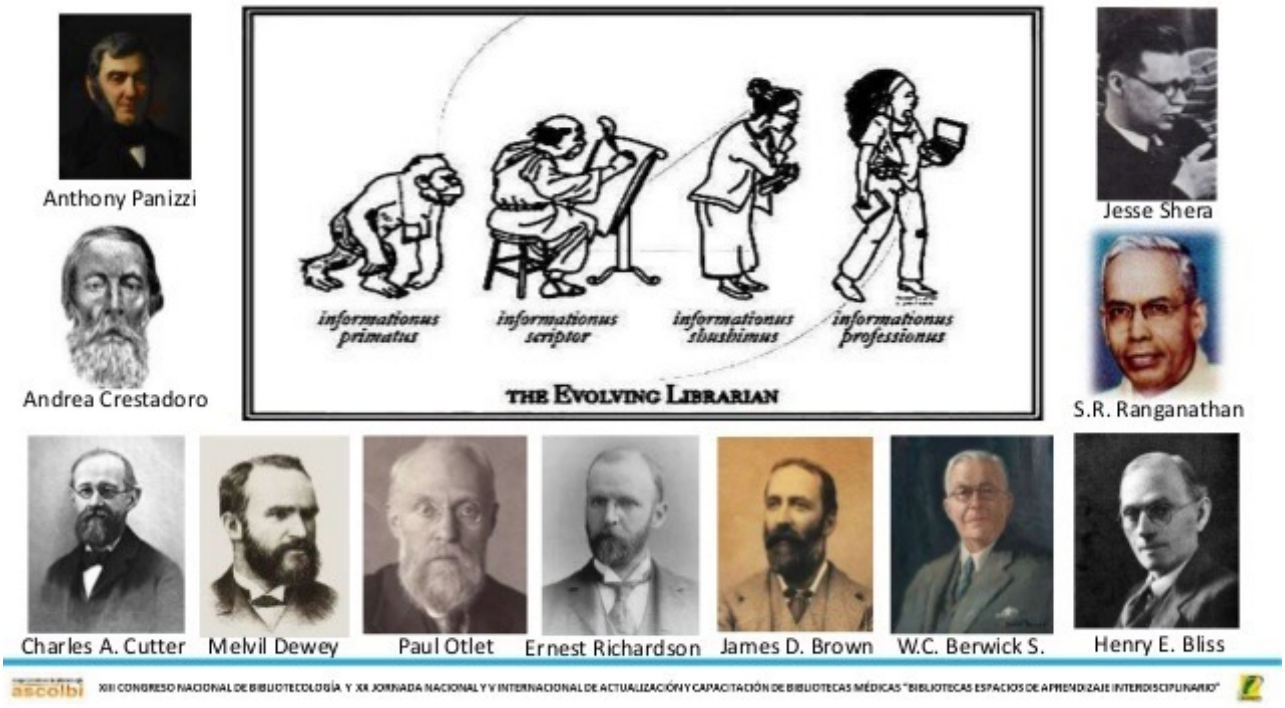



Fig.25 Evolution of a Librarian

[266] W. E. Axon, 'The Art of Cataloguing', *The Library World* 2 (1921) (Reprinted chapter from W. E. A. Axon's *Handbook of the Public Libraries of Manchester and Salford* (Manchester: Heywood, 1877)

[267] Miller, *Prince of Librarians*, p.272

[268] A.H.Chaplin, *GK: 150 Years of the General Catalogue of Printed Books in the British Museum* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1987) p.43

[269] David Lodge, *A Man of Parts* (London: Secker, 2011) p.310

[270] Charles C. Jewett, *Smithsonian report on the Construction of Catalogues of Libraries and of A General Catalogue and their Publication by means of separate, stereotyped titles* (Washington: Smithsonian, 1852) p.4

[271] Hope A. Olson, *The Power to Name: Locating the Limits of Subject Representation in Libraries* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2002) p.246

[272] MA Crestadoro, Manchester Letter re Jewett

[273] Jewett, *Smithsonian report on the Construction of Catalogues*.

[274] C.A.Cutter, 'Library catalogues' in United States Office of Education, *Public Libraries in the United States of America*, Part 1 (1876)

[275] IFLA Study Group, *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records* (Munich: K.G. Saur Verlag, 1998). Also online, www.ifla.org/files/assets/cataloguing/frbr/frbr.pdf

[276] Miller, *Prince of Librarians*, p. 178

[277] BM, CE 4/54 Original Papers no. 47 Panizzi - Crestadoro correspondence

[278] BM, CE 27/49 Letter Book p. 101

[279] BM, CE 27/49 Letter Book p. 101

[280] John Hopson, e-mail to author, 10 August 2004

[281] Harris *A History of the British Museum Library* Harris, p. 25 Also P. R. Harris, e-mail to author 2 September 2011: 'BM donations were stamped yellow until the 1940s, when green ink replaced yellow (because yellow faded badly). Red ink was used to stamp purchased material.'

[282] BM, CE 4/56 Original Papers no. 66 Panizzi - Crestadoro correspondence

[283] BM CE 27/52 Letter book, Jan-Dec 1857 p. 62

[284] John Metcalfe, *Information Retrieval, British & American 1876-1976* (Metuchen: Scarecrow, 1976)

[285] Metcalfe, *Information Retrieval*, pp.34-35

[286] P.R. Harris, e-mail to author

[287] Hewish, *Rooms Near Chancery Lane*, p.150

[288] Boase, *Modern English Biography*

[289] Alva T. Stone (ed.), *The LCSH Century: One Hundred Years with the Library of Congress Subject Headings System* (New York: Haworth, 2000) p. 37

[290] P. R. Harris, e-mail to author, 31 July 2009

[291] P. R. Harris, e-mail to author, 31 July 2009

[292] Metcalfe, *Information Retrieval*, p.34

[293] Warren Boyd Rayward, 'Systematic bibliography in England; 1850-1895', Occasional papers (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Graduate School of Library Science), 84 (1967)

[294] Lucy Evans, 'Early Days of DDC Networking in the UK', in *New Perspectives on Subject Indexing and Classification Essays in Honour of Magda Heiner-Freiling* (Berlin: DNB, 2008)

[295] Agnese Galeffi, 'Biographical and cataloguing common ground: Panizzi and Lubetzky, kindred spirits separated by a century', *Library & Information History*, 24:4 (December 2009), 227-246

[296] Agnese Galeffi, e-mail to author, 10 May 2010

[297] Alfredo Serrai, *Storia della Bibliografia Parte II Specilizzazione e Pragmatismo: I nuovi cardini della attivita bibliografica* (Roma: Bulzoni, 1999) pp. 971-984

[298] Translation courtesy of Professor Lawrence Rainey

[299] Translation courtesy of Professor Lawrence Rainey

[300] Carlo Revelli, *Il Catalogo per Soggetti* (Roma; Bizzarri, 1970) pp.35-40

[301] Corinne Belier, Barry Bergdoll, Marc Le Coeur, Martin Bressani, Henri Labrouste: *Structure brought to Light* (New York: MOMA, 2012) p.166

[302] UML, W.E.A. Axon Papers 310, 315, 319

# Chapter Eleven: Italian Networks

> Dr. ANDREA CRESTADORO, the chief librarian of the Manchester Free Library, has been appointed a Knight of the Order of the Crown of Italy. Cavaliere Crestadoro is best known in this country for the great and beneficial influence he has had upon provincial bibliography and library work generally, but he is also a writer on financial and scientific subjects.[303]

## Italian Communities

From early in the nineteenth century, waves of Italians had arrived in London and other major cities, escaping from the devastation of the Napoleonic wars and the famines that hit parts of northern Italy in 1816 and 1817. They were traditional migrants fleeing economic repression and tyranny to find a better way of life, rather than political exiles. There were rural seasonal workers, gang masters and their leased street boys, skilled artisans, instrument makers, financiers, merchants, entertainers and enterprising professionals. However seductively the literary and artistic dreams of Italy haunted the minds of those educated by the classics and the Grand Tour, there was always an undercurrent of hostility that grew exponentially with the numbers of incoming Italians:

> But by then the Italian street urchins had exhausted the goodwill of the public, which lazily (if predictably) gave into the prejudice that had existed against all Italians for years. Tobias Smollett ('all the common people are thieves and beggars'), Percy Shelley ('stupid and shrivelled slaves') and Thomas Macaulay ('a race corrupted by bad government and a bad religion') had reflected the general view of the British nation for a hundred years.[304]

Italian children certainly gave colour to the London streets, carrying around wax or plaster images for display, exhibiting white mice, dancing monkeys or tortoises. Onlookers tended to regard them

kindly, seeing them as a better type of beggar, and concern was expressed at the conditions they lived in. Cases such as the murder of fourteen-year-old Carlo Ferrari by body snatchers, as told by Sarah Wise in *The Italian Boy*,[305] revealed a shocking, countrywide exploitation of these children by the padroni, who owned both them and the animals.

It was increasingly hard for immigrants and dispossessed natives alike to survive on the streets, as the infamous New Poor Amendment Act of 1834 impacted with repressive regulations on noise and nuisance.

## Anti-Catholic

Crestadoro lived in London in a period where there was hostility to the expanding ghettoes of Catholic Italian communities, such as Clerkenwell. According to Lucio Sponza, between the 1820s and 1851 4000 Italians migrated to Britain with half of them settling in London.[306] In 1850 and 1851 there was a resurgence of anti-Catholic animosity as the Pope restored the Catholic hierarchy in England with bishops replacing administrators. Parliament passed hasty legislation, preventing the Catholic Bishops from using the same place names as Anglican bishops in their titles. The visible influx of desperately poor Irish Catholics in main towns and cities like London, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow, especially after the potato famines of 1845-1849, created more tensions that exploded on occasion into riot.

The Irish and the Italians became domiciled in Britain, often based in the same territories and fighting for supremacy. Relations between the communities were volatile with religious divisions centring on Garibaldi. The formation of the Irish Battalion in 1860 to defend the Papal States made hatred of Garibaldi a dogma of Irish nationalism. The British Government remained generally sympathetic to the Italian cause, but not of course to Ireland.

## Mistrust and Marriage

In 1879, *The Lancet* blamed cholera outbreaks on the 'poisonous ice-cream'[307] produced by Italians in their slums and served in filthy glasses. There was an increasing view of the Italians as a criminal class, although like the gypsies they had a romantic mystique. This led to a further development:

> Many of the Italian bachelors who landed in London found it all too easy to follow in Casanova's footsteps: British women warmed to their Mediterranean manner. One journalist who tiptoed into an Italian club found it full of drinking and dancing, and noticed with horror that the girls were 'without exception' English. The rate of intermarriage was exceptionally high: of 94 marriages involving Italian men in 1851, 74 were to British women; of the 217 marriages registered in 1881, nearly half were Anglo-Italian.[308]

Lucio Sponza, in his authoritative account, *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Realities and Images*, sees this trend, which was predominantly amongst skilled workers, as a natural result of both the scarcity of Italian women immigrants and as part of inevitable integration:

> Unlike itinerant Italians, whose occupation was temporary, if not seasonal, by its nature and organization, skilled workers were likely to be much more integrated in the host society. Marrying an English woman was both the result of this, and a contributing factor to the process of sedentarisation.[309]

As already mentioned, the Italian political exiles tended to marry English women.

## How did Crestadoro fit in?

The *Momus* caricature of Crestadoro shows him as splendidly bearded. If he were as luxuriantly hirsute in 1849 he would have been regarded with suspicion. As Michael Alpert comments; 'Military men affected moustaches, but facial hair was usually considered to be a sign of mental imbalance, eccentricity, immorality or being a revolutionary and very likely foreign into the bargain.'[310] Beards only became fashionable around 1855 with the Crimean war.

By coming to England to further his career as an inventor, Crestadoro was following the tradition of the skilled technicians who were pre-eminent in optical and measuring instruments and welcomed into the cities that needed their talents. Since the eighteenth century, Italians had been significant in production of barometers and other measuring instruments: the Ronchetti and then the Casartelli families were prominent in Manchester.

Crestadoro does not seem to have sought the support and company of the Italian community; his addresses in both London and Manchester were firmly linked with his English enterprises. He may have deliberately avoided his countrymen in view of his abandoned priesthood, and his presentation of himself as a professor (though he did not attempt this with Panizzi or Sampson Low where he was plain Mr. Crestadoro). As an inventor he lived near workshops or the PO, and as a scholar in Bloomsbury in the London squares frequented by reformers, educationalists, the literati, the publishers and researchers who thronged in the shadow of the great BM.

In Manchester he lived in the Chorlton-on-Medlock area, a mixture of mills, back to backs, terraces and larger houses where many of the middle class lived, the Gaskells amongst them, distinct from the industrial slums of Ancoats down the road which later became known as Little Italy. To begin with, there were only a few hundred Italians in Manchester. The main expansion came from the late 1850s onwards with the Italian presence overtaking the Irish in Ancoats. The Italian community there was very much one of trade, ice cream, plastering, barrel organs, terrazzo, mosaic tiling and scientific instruments. The professionals such as Crestadoro or the town clerk Ruspini were rare.

## The right sort of Italian

Like Panizzi, Crestadoro cared for the cause of Italy but as an individual he admired England and became naturalized in 1866. There was always a place for educated Italians, even if their success was resented in some quarters. Society was prepared to be charmed and entertained by Italian exiles of the right sort.

The liberal attitude of the British Government in providing a bolt hole for both political exiles and criminals, as well as allowing the exploitation of children, earned bitter comment from other European powers. As Robert Winder comments: 'the British attachment to individual liberty was stronger even than its dislike of shifty foreigners.'[311]

In 1851 around 5,000 Italians were recorded as living in England and Wales. By 1872 the fallout from unification had boosted this to 11,000 or more. Crestadoro was not alone in finding that England suited him. As the restaurant trade flourished and street selling decreased, the Italian community generally became an accepted and welcome part of life. The contribution of their engineers was especially valued.

In another respect as well, Crestadoro followed the pattern of the Italian immigrant.

He married an Englishwoman, as did many of his compatriots, some, as we have seen thereby gaining income, security and status. Crestadoro married for love, as he was only able to do this

when he gained his salaried position in Manchester. His wife was y a teacher and probably from the lower middle class, related to publicans and landladies.

## L'Angelo Salvatore - William Shaen

Crestadoro may have forged an independent path away from his compatriots but like many of them he needed 'L'Angelo Salvatore', the guardian angel of the Italian political exiles, William Shaen. Even when settled in Manchester, Crestadoro still kept in touch with William Shaen, the distinguished London solicitor, entrusting him with his complicated will.

Immigrants share intelligence on support networks. For example, since Victorian times, anyone emigrating from Ireland to Leeds knew to go to the Roscoe pub, the main meeting place where letters could be picked up, friends made and work found. (The Roscoe was much lamented when it disappeared under the Sheepscar interchange in the 1980s. There cannot be many pubs commemorated with a piper, funeral procession and gravestone.) William Shaen was the human equivalent of the Roscoe.

His name bobs up repeatedly in most aspects of Victorian reform. He came from a Unitarian family at Hatfield Peverel in Essex and all his life followed liberal principles, placing himself through marriage and his own reputation amongst the most eminent. He was well known to influential groups in both London and Manchester: the reference he supplied for Crestadoro would have borne weight with the Manchester Free Library Committee.

William Shaen was the legal advisor, supporter and constant friend of the Italian exiles, combining astute insights with sympathy and admiration. Some of his neat and humorous correspondence survives. Brief accounts of William Shaen appear in many memoirs and in all these there is no word of criticism or dislike. Apparently he never fell out with anyone, quite an achievement when he was dealing with an uncommonly lively and temperamental range of clients and friends, from Charles Dickens, Angela Burdett-Coutts, W. T. Stead, and Mazzini through to the Gaskells.

He supported women's suffrage, education for women, particularly in medicine and chemistry. As a trustee, he helped Elizabeth Reid in founding Bedford College, the first non-sectarian college for women. In 1890, a wing for teaching physics and chemistry was named in his honour.

He was closely involved with the female circles of Mrs Gaskell and her daughters, with the Winkworth sisters, famous for scholarship and feminism, and with the sisters who formed Mazzini's English family and paid no heed to conventions, the Ashursts of Muswell Hill.

William Shaen took his articles under Mr. Ashurst, well known himself as a radical lawyer, and thereafter acted as solicitor for Mrs Gaskell, married Emily Winkworth and moved in the literary society that included George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë, Jane Carlyle and Mrs Browning.

## Shaen and Mazzini

Mazzini first arrived in England in 1837 or in late 1836, according to Carlyle.

William Shaen is listed as one of the many who helped Mazzini establish the Free Italian School in Bloomsbury in 1841. Their real friendship dates from 1844 through the affray of the Post Office's opening of Mazzini's letters and supplying information to foreign powers. This caused a great furore and one happy outcome was that the Ashursts made contact with Mazzini, and through their circles he met William Shaen regularly. The Ashursts and Shaen became his treasured 'English family'.

To the end of his life, William Shaen revered Mazzini, remaining his close friend and supporter, albeit he kept a cool eye on the risks, restraining his wife Emily in her first response to help, as she detailed in a letter to her sister, Catherine Winkworth:

> It was half-past nine before we had an opportunity to talk over what had been in our minds since last Monday, namely, what we could do for Mazzini. Will didn't approve of our selling anything -best clock, bits of jewellery, &c.-which I had thought of as a better thing than money. Because you can say: 'I will do without such and such an article of luxury,' but we can't say: 'I will not want this five guineas for living expenses within the next twelvemonth.' However, Will decided it would not be right at present for us to give anything, and I agreed though disappointed.[312]

Mazzini's copious letters, rarely dated and sometimes omitting his address as a precaution, show regular correspondence with William Shaen. He used Shaen to shield him against importuning fellow exiles, and so Shaen started dealing with their problems and became their 'L'Angelo Salvatore'. In 1847 Mazzini and his English disciples, of whom William Shaen was a key member, founded The People's International League and William Shaen supported this Italian movement both with practical help and with funds for Mazzini's insurrections. As well as Mazzini, William Shaen was a close friend of Aurelio Saffi, and an organiser of funds for Garibaldi's assault on Rome in 1862.

William Shaen's endeavours were recognised in Italy. In 1880, he was invited to the Congress of the British and Continental Federation at Genoa and visited a shrine, the underground cell where Maurizio Quadrio had spent years printing revolutionary papers.

When he was invited to attend the unveiling of the Mazzini monument in Genoa, in a long and emotional reply William Shaen attested that Mazzini: 'was the greatest, the wisest, and the best man I have known, and that to him I owe more than to any other Teacher.'[313]

## Shaen, Mazzini - and Crestadoro?

William Shaen must have given Crestadoro guidance for survival in London; perhaps he recommended him to Sampson Low. As a Fellow of UCL he may have encouraged Crestadoro's application for the Italian Chair. This cannot be verified as the applications and testimonials have not been preserved. Later on, he provided Crestadoro with crucial references for the Manchester appointment. Did Shaen inspire Crestadoro to leave money in his will for the education of women in Genoa? Certainly they shared the same liberal approaches and although Crestadoro did not start the service, as Chief Librarian he ensured Manchester Free Libraries continued to serve the blind, a cause dear to William Shaen who was on the board of the Royal Normal College for the Blind.

As well as being Crestadoro's solicitor and trustee, William Shaen was a link in a significant contact. The one piece of evidence that suggests that Crestadoro's role in England was not limited to his inventions and indexing, is in a letter from Mazzini to William Shaen, dated 25 January 1859: 'The translation from Crestadoro is good enough. And in a very few days I shall be able to tell you if I can make some use of him. I am so overwhelmed by business—Italian business - that I don't know how to find time to think.'[314]

There seem to be no further references, though, as the letters of William Shaen are present in the archives of the many worthy people who were his friends, it is possible something may yet turn up. I traced the descendant of the firm to the current practice of Shaen Roscoe & Swift of Stanford-le-Hope, Essex. The courteous Godwin Swift, as well as providing this photograph of William Shaen,

broke the news that the firm's papers had been destroyed on leaving London in the 1970s.

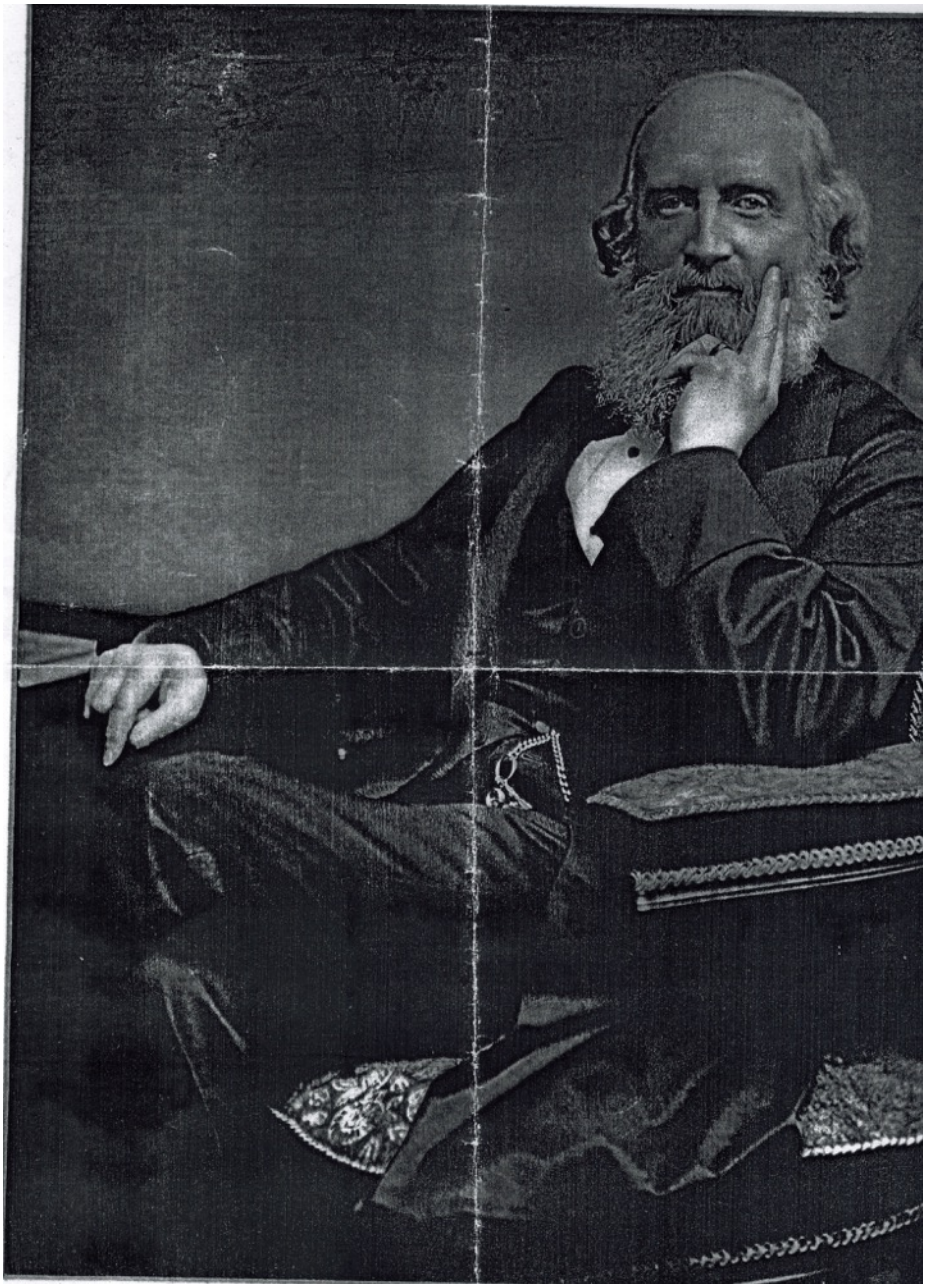


Fig.26 William Shaen

## Shaen's Funeral

The rituals of Shaen's funeral in March 1887 reflected the many disparate groups he had supported throughout his life. Members of The Association of Italian Working Men in London, placed their wreath, tied with Italian colours, at the head of the coffin. Other wreaths came from women's groups such as the Belgian feminist movement. In addition, the choir from the Royal Normal College for the Blind sang for him. It is difficult in describing William Shaen not to sound flowery and eulogistic, a problem all his friends had in their memories of him. As was recorded at his funeral: 'He was eyes to the blind and feet was he to the lame. He was a father to the needy, and the cause of him that he knew not he searched out. And he brake the jaws of the unrighteous and plucked the prey out of his teeth.'[315]

## Mazzini's Bomb

There is a curious incident recorded by the notoriously extravagant writer Ford Madox Hueffer. Long after Shaen's death a dusty object in the attic of the office turned out to be a bomb. Apparently Shaen had let Mazzini stay in the attic for a time:

> One day one of the partners was dictating a difficult letter to a clerk in such an attic. He stood before the fire and absent-mindedly fingered a dusty, spherical object of iron that stood upon the mantelpiece. Getting hold of the phrase he wanted, he threw, still absent-mindedly this iron object into the fire. He finished dictating the letter and left the room. Immediately afterward there was a terrific explosion. The round object was nothing more nor less than a small bomb. With such objects Mazzini had passed his time while, years before, he had dreamed of the liberation of Italy.[316]

## The London Trail

The whole list of Crestadoro's London addresses can be constructed from his BM reader registrations and from his letters. The neighbourhoods he lived in reflect his different career moves.

Following the trail of Crestadoro's addresses is a challenge. Some streets have vanished, street numbers have changed, buildings have been replaced by modern developments or so altered that there is no mark of the past.

Before he moved to the addresses close to Vauxhall and Nine Elms, Crestadoro was lodging in July1849 at Alfred Place, Bedford Square, a large handsome building still in existence. It is near the BM and not too far away from Bedford Row where William Shaen had his office. This suggests that Crestadoro contacted William Shaen very soon after his arrival in London.

Next, between 1850 and 1853 he is recorded closer to Nine Elms. January 1850 finds him removed to Knights Place, Wandsworth Road. The industrial area of Vauxhall, from all accounts was an insalubrious and dangerous area. Some of the streets he first lived in near Vauxhall have disappeared; the new Covent Garden market swamps much of what was that area. Claylands Road and Harleyford Road are main roads, the numbers are still there (though with the provision that numbers change and may not be reliable) and the narrow houses look as if they could have provided fairly decent lodgings. Claylands is close to the old entrance to Vauxhall Gardens, the house is a grimy survival in the polluted air near busy traffic and railways, and maybe not too dissimilar from when Crestadoro lived there. This residence in London is interposed with periods in Salford for this is the time of Crestadoro's attempt to succeed as an inventor.

From 1854 onwards, Crestadoro was either around the PO area or in the cluster of streets around the BM, the heart of scholarship, reform, education, and publishing. *The Art of Making Catalogues* was published from 10 Brownlow Street, Holborn, presumably where he was living, next to the ancient Jockey's Field and close to the PO. This old street seems to have largely survived as offices.

Between 1854 and 1856, he was again Shaen's neighbour in Millman Street and then New Millman Street near Bedford Row. These houses have vanished under development, but enough remains to show this was probably a good area for lodging. In 1857, he was at 36 King Street Holborn, placing him near The Turk's Head where he may have met his future wife, daughter of the landlord.

He gravitated to Bloomsbury: on 15 April 1858, he advertised his availability for tuition from 48 Bernard Street Russell Square. Next, on 7 March 1859, he advertised tuition from 42 Great Russell Street. this once belonged to a publisher, according to the lady whose family has run the bookshop

next door for generations. Then in December 1859 he was at 12 Tottenham Court Road. In 1861, he moved to 18 Great Ormond Street, close to his future wife, living at number 20. His letters to Victor Hugo in September 1861 and to Manchester Free Libraries in May 1862 were addressed from 19 Great Ormond Street, which may equally denote a move or a house renumbering.

On holiday in 1868, he mentioned in a letter to Axon that he was staying with family at 20 Great Ormond Street en route to Brussels.

Great Ormond Street and its numbers are confusing and all these properties are now shops.

He never lived in the Italian settlements such as Clerkenwell.

## Manchester Italians

The Italian community in Manchester is extremely proud of its origins and traditions.

In the 1960s, redevelopment of Ancoats dispersed the settlement but the links have not been broken. There is an active Manchester Italian Association, family and local history websites and community exhibitions. The Italian Whit Walks in Manchester are the oldest in the country, dating back to 1890.

Until its clearance and redevelopment in the twenty first century Ancoats was one of the bleakest and most dangerous areas of Manchester. Angels did not inhabit Angels Meadows (laid over the cholera dead). Its significance is realized now by attempts to rescue some of the buildings, stranded amongst the stylish apartments and towers of urban enterprise.

Crestadoro had two addresses in Manchester. Both houses have been demolished. He lived for many years on Rumford Street, which is now transformed into University of Manchester territory. His second address was more up market, on the main Upper Brook Street near Plymouth Grove where Mrs. Gaskell lived. From both addresses Crestadoro could have caught the horse omnibus to Campfield or have walked to work.

Neither address is within the Italian community, and although Crestadoro had many friends in Manchester there is no indication he particularly sought out his countrymen.

## Agent for the Risorgimento?

Could Crestadoro have been an intelligence agent for Cavour, sending him reports on industry, inventions and networks?

It is tempting to speculate on these lines: England certainly seethed with networks of Italian exiles and political conspirators in the critical decades of the early and mid nineteenth century and Crestadoro was well placed to move amongst them. His mixture of interests gave him links to significant spheres of science, industry, information, printing, and publishing. He had a gift for languages and his sympathies were liberal.

The political conspirators despised those who left Italy merely to better themselves, as Crestadoro did. In 1834, Cavour wrote to his friend Madame de Circourt, rejecting her urgings to abandon stifling Piedmont for the open society of Paris. He saw no merit in exile for to him it represented a sterile fate: ‘No, no, not in fleeing one’s mother-country because she is unfortunate can one reach a glorious end. Woe to him who abandons in scorn the land that bore him, who renounces his brother as unworthy of him![317]

Garibaldi, the sailor, despised exile: he thought a better alternative was life at sea, preparing for the great war that was to come, otherwise a man: ‘must either be a slave or let himself be ruined or live

peacefully in England. Settling in America is even worse: for in that case all is over; that is a land in which a man forgets his native country.'

Yet sympathetic Italians who gained positions of influence abroad were of great use to the Risorgimento, and this included librarians.

## Four Italian Librarians

In his article *Immigrants, Refugees and Exiles: Foreign Librarians in Britain,* Stephen Massil lists three Italian librarians: 'as well as Panizzi: Andrea Crestadoro, 1810 [sic]-1879), and Sir James Lacaita, 1813-1895'.[318] There was also Count Ubaldo Marioni, librarian for ten years at the Bromley House Library in Nottingham.

Panizzi is still important internationally as a librarian and is acclaimed with pride in Italy. Lacaita is remembered in Italy as a politician; he was only briefly a librarian in exile and made no impact on the profession. Count Marioni is forgotten outside Nottingham. Crestadoro's achievements in librarianship are highly regarded by Italian information scientists and occasionally recognised elsewhere.

All four have in common that they were supportive of unification, all knew Mazzini, and all became naturalized and were associated with libraries. There are other shared aspects. Panizzi, Lacaita and Crestadoro were honoured with the Corona d'Italia, Panizzi receiving the higher rank. Panizzi, Lacaita and Crestadoro all rescued young Italians from desperate situations in Italy and brought them to England. Crestadoro and Marioni both left money for the education of girls in Italy.

How did Panizzi, Lacaita and Crestadoro earn their Corona d'Italia and why did Marioni fall into obscurity? What do their stories tell of their contributions to England and to Italy?

## Panizzi's Politics

Denis Reidy, a former colleague of mine at the BL, wrote a dashing account of Panizzi's adventures to free the Neapolitan prisoners. He summarised Panizzi's long years of commitment to Italian unification as follows: 'He worked tirelessly behind the scenes endeavouring to influence politicians, particularly Gladstone whom he counted as a personal friend, into keeping "The Italian Question" on the political agenda. Indeed for many years during his very eventful life in London, Panizzi acted as Cavour's unofficial Ambassador.'[319]

Panizzi also selectively helped fellow patriots. He welcomed Garibaldi on his visit to London in 1864: they paid tribute together at Ugo Foscolo's grave. However, he had little sympathy for Mazzini and his methods. His sympathies were more for a progressive broadening of freedom and a constitutional monarchy on the lines of the English government, a similar approach to Crestadoro's.

Yet Panizzi risked both life and career with two bold ventures.

Panizzi journeyed to Naples in November 1851, undertaking this dangerous mission in the hope of persuading King Ferdinand II to alleviate the conditions of his political prisoners. Gladstone recommended that he should contact George Fagan, James Lacaita and Sir William Temple there: they all proved valiant allies. Fagan accompanied Panizzi to the audience with Bomba.

> Ferdinand was in a good mood and after the expected first question, listened with courteous patience while Panizzi lectured him on the sufferings of Poerio and the other political prisoners and on the abuses to be found throughout his kingdom. After some

> twenty minutes of listening to the great Pan in full spate, the King closed the interview with the words, 'Addio, terribile Panazzi [sic],' and all was over. Ferdinand, who was by no means a fool, was quite aware of what was going on, but considered, with some justification, that his Neapolitans could be governed in no other way.[320]

The cause of the Neapolitan prisoners became a crusade with Panizzi at the forefront. Lacaita, and to a remarkable extent prominent English politicians and aristocrats, joined with him in planning an expedition to rescue the Neapolitan political prisoners: 'Little did the Trustees dream of what their fiery Keeper of Printed Books was really up to, planning to raid the coasts of a friendly power, with the active connivance of at least two of Her Majesty's representatives abroad.'[321]

Panizzi had powerful friends in the upper circles of society and politics: they were fervent in their help for the Neapolitan prisoners and several contributed funds for a ship. Lord Holland, Mrs Gladstone and her friends subscribed, whilst Gladstone and Palmerston freed up secret Government funds. The route to the prison island of Santo Stefano was plotted by Garibaldi and with the help of the British Minister in Naples, Sir William Temple (Palmerston's brother), letters were smuggled from the prison cell of Luigi Settembrini to Panizzi at the BM, protected by secret writing in lemon juice. The boldness of such eminent figures in becoming involved in a subversive plot against a foreign power is both astonishing and admirable. The steamer, *The Isle of Thanet*, was lost en route off Yarmouth. Panizzi, though devastated, carried on plotting and campaigning, even meeting with Garibaldi at the BM to plan another expedition.

Finally, in December 1856, the Neapolitan government tried to regain goodwill by offering to free those who asked for pardon publicly, with the alternative of exile to Argentina. Panizzi feared this would be a trap and long negotiations ensued. In 1859, permission was given for the prisoners to be sent to New York, though there had been no consultation with the United States Government. The *Stromboli* set sail with the sixty- six prisoners, still officially galley slaves and subject to discipline. They were transferred at Cadiz to an American ship, the *David Stewart*. In a theatrical turn of events an 'English officer' at Cadiz asked to see Luigi Settembrini: it was his disguised son Raffaele, Panizzi's errant protégé, now a valiant seaman with service in the Crimea. Once the *David Stewart* set sail, Raffaele and his accomplices took control of the ship and forced the captain to sail to Cork, the nearest British port. Panizzi became secretary of the fund set up to aid the Neapolitan political prisoners on their eventual arrival in London.

## Lacaita

Sir James Lacaita was a much more cautious patriot than Panizzi with distinct reservations about the radical elements:

> No one would ever have called him a Jacobin or a red as Thiers did Panizzi, even if half in jest. He successfully avoided being compromised with Orsini and shared none of his friend's passionate enthusiasm for Garibaldi. He was always far more sceptical than was Panizzi as to the ultimate success of the movement for Italian unification and in 1860 seriously considered returning home to serve the hastily reformed Bourbon monarchy.[322]

Lacaita was a charming and well-liked gentleman, 'persona gratissima' as the ninth Duke of Argyll called him. After fleeing Naples, he married his beloved Maria Carmichael, lived in Edinburgh then London, taught Italian at Queen's College, lectured to the elite and wrote books and articles: a familiar pattern. He also briefly ventured into librarianship. Lacaita was naturalized, joined the Church of England and after the tragic death of his wife, was supported by Gladstone who took him

as secretary to the Ionian Islands. His brilliant performance there earned him his KCMG. He continued to be influential amongst the Whigs, second only to Panizzi. He eventually returned to Italy, becoming a politician, landowner and businessman, with interests in Anglo-Italian branches of English companies such as the Southern Railways. It was said of him:

> With a mentality which from association, became entirely British when he was with his English and Scotch friends, he could yet revert to the type of the old-fashioned southern Italian gentleman when he returned to his native province, and he was, as perhaps no one else could be, the ideal interpreter of one nation to the other.[323]

Reserved as he was on the practicality of Italian unification, it was Lacaita who brought about the turning point in the fortunes of the Risorgimento. The famous episode is his dash from his sickbed, on the telegraphed command of Cavour, to seek an audience with Lord Russell. Finding him engaged he dramatically entered into Lady Russell's bedchamber (she too was ill), and appealed to her fervently. She summoned her astonished husband who heard Laciata out as he begged that Lord John Russell send away the French Ambassador (who was sitting downstairs) and deny his request for the English Navy to join with the French to prevent Garibaldi's assault on Naples. Russell had been on the point of agreement with the Ambassador, but was persuaded by Lacaita's passionate pleading to change his mind. The plans of the French Ambassador and the Neapolitan Minister were thwarted, Garibaldi crossed the Straits of Messina unhindered, took Naples and Italian unification was won.

Ironically, most references to Lacaita as a librarian refer to 'the Lacaita affair of the 1850s' when he failed to win the appointment of librarian at The London Library.

Lacaita was not prominent as a librarian; the role was only incidental in his life. He was, like Panizzi, an intimate of the elite circles of English society, a man of fine and honourable principles. His sensitivities to social niceties and manners and his nervous hesitation in taking any position that might do him harm socially are understandable in an exile who had very little means but links through marriage to high society.

Lacaita eventually passed pleasant summers, following the occupation that had been traditional for librarians before the bustling new world of the Free Libraries shook them up, serving the great private collections:

> Before going to Bowood, my father visited the Duke of Devonshire at Hardwick Hall, whence he drove over to inspect the library at Chatsworth for which a catalogue was contemplated. The inspection showed that re-arranging and recataloguing were needed before an index of matters to it could be made.
>
> The compilation of the catalogue occupied my father during the summer months of a good many years to come. He used to enjoy the quiet weeks spent at work in that great house, often alone, sometimes with his son to keep him company; sometimes the Duke was also there.[324]

The four volumes of the catalogue were published in 1879, scholarly but unremarkable from a cataloguing point of view. Yet the idea of his librarianship persists.

The *DNB* entry briefly mentions the Chatsworth Catalogue and Lacaita's unsuccessful application to The London Library. Lacaita is described in *DNB* as: 'a notable Dante scholar, an excellent bibliographer, a man of wide reading and sympathy' so perhaps those aspects have blurred to give substance to his foray into librarianship.

## The Fourth Italian Librarian

Count Ubaldo Marioni has largely escaped notice as the fourth Italian librarian in nineteenth century England. I first encountered him from the account by Neal Priestland on the Bromley House Library website.[325] Neal Priestland has also written a booklet, *The Letters of Count Ubaldo Marioni (1804-1886)*, which includes a valuable biography and commentary as well as the texts of the letters held by Nottinghamshire Archives.

Marioni came to England with good credentials as a political refugee. He had fled Perugia in 1849 and arrived in London as an envoy for Mazzini's Roman Republic, accredited by Carlo Russini. He stayed for a time with the Carlyles. Thomas Carlyle described him as: 'a rational, sincere-looking man come hither from Rome, to negotiate about the poor Roman Republic and its many troubles.'[326] Newspaper reports of his addresses to meetings in support of the Roman Republic in 1849 show he spoke with passion. Count Marioni, like other exiles, deeply appreciated the welcome in England: 'Really, it is overpowering to see the way in which the English people assume upon themselves the expression of sympathy for our oppression.'[327]

Marioni should have been a key figure but somehow was disregarded. Mazzini warned Jessie White in 1857: 'Do not write to Marioni; good as he is, he knows nothing of the actual condition of Italy: he has not a single correspondent since years and is in a dreamy half-Piedmontese, half-Palmerstonian condition.'[328]

Marioni was appointed librarian at the Bromley House Library in Nottingham in December 1857 and led a quiet life there. He remained until 1 July 1867 when he honourably resigned after some members campaigned against him. Other members supported him vigorously. This dissatisfaction may be an excuse for financial cutting; Neal Priestland notes that in March 1867: 'the combined salaries of £152 per year from librarians Marioni and Banwell caused a protest from subscribers.'[329]

Neal Priestland assesses him as follows: 'He seems to have been a satisfactory, if not outstanding, librarian, not taking his duties more seriously than was strictly necessary.'[330]

Marioni remained in Nottingham at various addresses and then, around 1881, he moved to a cottage in Woodhouse Eaves near Loughborough. Presumably he had sufficient means from his family background to support himself, although he does worry about this as his infirmities increase.

The thirty-six letters associated with Marioni date from September 1881 to August 1882. These are preserved in the archive of Richard Enfield, a Nottingham solicitor. A large part of the correspondence concerns Marioni's efforts to help Julie Schwabe to fund education for poor girls in Naples. Julie Schwabe was one of the key figures of both the Italian network and the Manchester Unitarian network.

When he died, Marioni's money went to his friends Sophie Herrick and the Reverend Thomas Street Millington. Julie Schwabe wrote to Pasquale Villari in 1887 that she had one thousand pounds from Marioni for 'education of poor girls of his native town of Gubbio'[331] and that the friends who inherited the rest were inclined to donate that as well, in which case she would set up a Marioni Home at Naples. Julie Schwabe successfully established other schools for poor children in Naples and the Froebelian kindergarten passed into state control in 1887.

## Marioni, Dante Scholar and Republican

Once I was made aware of Count Marioni I came across other mentions and found that, like Panizzi, he was reputed to be a Dante scholar. The translator of Dante, I.C. Wright, included both in

his thanks for assistance, Marioni with especial enthusiasm: 'to Mr. Panizzi, and last, not least, to Count Marioni, from whose exquisite taste, and marvellous knowledge of Dante, the translator has derived the greatest advantage in preparing the present edition.'[332]

The troubled Anglo-Catholic, Thomas Alexander Lacey, born in Nottingham in 1853, gave a colourful account of Marioni:

> It was some little time after the affair of the Porta Pia that I made the acquaintance of Count Ubaldo Marioni, the intransigent Roman Republican. Old and nearly blind, and very poor, he longed for someone to read Dante to him. I offered my services but he could not endure my accent and told me so without any regard for my feelings which were then at a tender age. He would talk by the hour of the great days of '48 but with bitterness of soul. He scorned with reason, the liberalism of 'Papa Carbonara': he would not speak of the assassination of De Rossi as anything but a blunder; he had been something of a swashbuckler, had argued politics at the point of a duelling sword, and had forced the pacific Prince of Canino to fight by hurling at him in the Chamber an insulting reference to Of the Ethics of Insurrection.[333]

Marioni had resources but worried about money and was careful with it, which may explain the description of 'very poor'. The view of Marioni as an intransigent Republican in his old age is intriguing, and it is frustrating not to know more about all this.

In 1895, Ward and Downey published *The Daughters of Marioni*, by the popular novelist, E. Phillips Oppenheim. The reviewer in the *Liverpool Mercury*, Wednesday 11 September 1895, was much taken by this tale of Sicilian revenge and by one character in particular: 'The figure of Count Marioni is one that dwells in the memory, first as a young and eager man full of mad jealousy, and then as old and broken, but still dominated by the master-passion of his life.'

Whether he inspired this or not, Count Marioni certainly merits *joining* the ranks of the dashing Italian librarian adventurers.

## Crestadoro's Bequest

Crestadoro's will is dated 2 January 1874. In it he leaves one hundred pounds and all the house contents to his wife, and the rest to William Shaen as trustee to administer the residual to provide her with income, and if she dies, to his nephew and niece in La Spezia. If they die without issue, Shaen is to hand it over to the Municipality of Genoa for 'the purposes of female education in said city'. Crestadoro's aspiration was beyond the financial reality for at probate it turned out that he left less than one hundred pounds.

Did Crestadoro and Marioni ever hear of each other? They were gravitating around the same networks and they had much in common. Julie Schwabe's efforts for education in Naples started as early as 1861 and might have inspired Crestadoro as well Marioni to leave money for the education for girls or women in Italy.

Crestadoro arrived after the Schwabes' time in Manchester but he would have been well aware of them and their impact on the city. Two of her sons still ran the calico printing business and the warehouse there. Julie Schwabe would have been much discussed by his acquaintances such as the Gaskells, especially for her Italian enterprises.

Neal Priestland's booklet is an invaluable source for Count Ubaldo Marioni and the tale of how, isolated though he was from the Italian community, he continued to contribute to the new nation.

## Honours for Panizzi, Lacaita and Crestadoro

Panizzi, Lacaita and Crestadoro were all awarded the Corona d'Italia. Whether this was principally for services rendered to the Risorgimento or simply because they had brought honour to Italy by their achievements is an open question.

In 1865, Panizzi was offered the appointment of Senator by the first King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II, the constitutional monarch of a newly unified nation. Panizzi delayed accepting this title until three years later 'when it was offered by the present Minister Menabrea, a man of honour and character'[334] but never took his seat as his health was declining. In 1866, after thirty years service, he had given up his final post of Principal Librarian at the BM, being no longer equal to his duties. The stresses and persecutions of his busy life at the BM may have been largely responsible for his physical collapse; even his free time had been sacrificed to the Italian cause. Despite his reluctance for such rituals, both Italy and England heaped honours on him. The Italian honour came on the 22 April 1868, when he was made a Commander of the Order of the Crown of Italy. The award to Panizzi may reflect Victor Emmanuel's personal admiration for the resolution and principles of the 'great God Pan' as Sir James Hudson entitled him.[335] Gladstone made him a Knight of the Bath in 1869, though he refused when first offered, and it took Lacaita and Hudson's intervention to persuade him.

Lacaita too was offered a position in the new Italian Government. He become a deputy in 1861, remained active in public affairs and eventually was made a senator in 1876, though apparently not surrendering his English nationality as required officially.

From then on, his life was spent between England and Italy. He became involved in Anglo-Italian companies; he was Director of the Italian branch of Southern Railways. Lacaita bought an estate near Manduria where he was born, on the instep of the heel of Italy, and continued for the rest of his life to be active in correspondence with distinguished social and political friends in England. His long friendships with those with whom he had shared the struggles for Italian unification, Gladstone, Hudson, Panizzi survived to their deaths and the younger generations made much of him. Amongst them was Janet Ross, author of the influential *Leaves from our Tuscan Kitchen*.[336] She and Lacaita exchanged frequent visits to each other's estates.

Honours for Lacaita and Crestadoro came speedily after Victor Emmanuel II's death on 9 January 1878. Soon after ascending the throne, Umberto I awarded Crestadoro and Sir James Lacaita with the Corona d'Italia at the rank of Knight. As well as honouring individuals Umberto honoured the Risorgimento, for in the same year he also founded the National Museum of the Risorgimento in Turin.

## Corona d'Italia, Gold or Gilt?

Opinions vary on the merit of the Corona d'Italia. One expert I consulted, Alan Humphries, thought the medal: 'was quite widely awarded for mostly cultural merit'.[337] Other sources indicate the medal represented an important publicity exercise, a way of rewarding Italians abroad who had brought the new nation credit, particularly where they had made impact on scholarship and education. It was all part of establishing the status and significance of the new Italy. Count Menabrea as Prime Minister of Italy, inspired by his admiration of Smiles and *Self Help* sent this circular to Italian consuls across the world:

> I beg you to occupy yourself in collecting biographical notices respecting the Italians who have honestly enriched themselves in other regions, particularly referring to the obstacles

> of their previous life, and to the efforts and the means which they employed for vanquishing them, as well as to the advantages which they secured for themselves, for the countries in which they settled, and for the country to which they owed their birth.[338]

The list that Menabrea hoped would: 'exercise a powerful influence on the increased greatness of our country' was not published as he had hoped, but influenced the later work by Professor Lessona in *Volere e Polere*.[339] Lessona lists eminent self-help examples for Genoa and Turin but, sadly, no Crestadoro.[340]

Count Arrivabene (ex Italian Chair at UCL) recorded the Corona d'Italia's conception as he witnessed it on board the frigate *Maria Adelaide*, sailing from Genoa to Leghorn in April 1860. The King and Cavour were smoking cigars to greet dawn: 'as the sun had arisen into the pure sky of the Mediterranean sea' when the idea for a medal to bestow on: 'all those who have worked for the triumph of our cause' was raised by Cavaliere Arton. Cavour gave it short shrift:

> While engaged in this discussion, Count Cavour came up and asked what was the subject which so interested us. I informed him; whereupon he turned to Arton, and said: – 'How can you lose your time in such a discussion? Do you not know that in thirty years all these baubles' (pointing to the stars which adorned his uniform) 'will have disappeared utterly, and will only be found on the breasts of actors who play the parts of Generals and Ministers on the stage?'[341]

Despite Cavour's contempt, the order was inaugurated to mark the marriage of the Prince of Piedmont to his cousin in May 1868, along with other 'questionable excesses in an impoverished nation' as Our Own Correspondent from Italy scathingly reported it in *The Times* of 25 May 1868. He also associated with the Risorgimento:

> if things continue as they have begun we may expect in a very few years to see the red riband with a white stripe as common as buttonholes both in Italy and abroad as the green one has long been. The Crown of Italy is supposed to be more especially conferred upon persons who have rendered services to the Italian cause and contributed to the formation of the Italian Kingdom. But who in this country does not claim to have done that?

Over time, the contemptuous references continue for the Corona d'Italia became a symbol of the bitter taste of the Risorgimento, once the glory days were over. In Lampedusa's novel *The Leopard* Don Calogero is the dark reality of the new Italy, seizing power, money, land and political influence to climb the social ladder. The niceties of polite manners present him with constant traps, display of the Corona d'Italia being one:

> In her wake came Don Calogero, a rat escorting a rose: though his clothes had no elegance, this time they were at least decent. His only mistake was wearing in his buttonhole the Cross of the Order of the Crown of Italy; but this soon vanished into one of the secret pockets in Tancredi's tail-coat.[342]

## Value to the Recipients

Panizzi despised honours as worthless trinkets. Lacaita was socially ambitious yet the Corona d'Italia does not seem to have been particularly significant to him. His son did not mention it in his biography, though he describes at length the value his father placed on his election to the Athenaeum Club in 1865. In 1874, Lacaita added to his glories the triumph of joining the exclusive circle of The Literary Club, founded by Dr. Johnson – 'an honour which he valued almost as highly as being a Senator.'[343]

As with the Risorgimento itself, the Corona d'Italia arouses mixed reactions but whatever its merits, the honour usefully brought Crestadoro into the view of the English press. As a British citizen, the national as well as the local newspapers reported his award. Had he remained as an Italian citizen it is unlikely the event would have been noted at a national level. As Alan Humphries commented: 'Queen Victoria was fairly laid back about other monarchs and states giving awards to British citizens, and it is not really until the early 1900's that the system of having to ask permission to accept and/or wear foreign awards began to be firmly applied.'[344]

The award to Crestadoro was directly linked to his recent pamphlet on tax reform in the *Momus* article but this alone is unlikely to have brought the award. Behind, lies a life of learning, invention and librarianship that was surely the foundation for the honour. *The Academy* of 23 March 1878, emphasises his bibliographic achievements:

> Dr. ANDREA CRESTADORO, the chief librarian of the Manchester Free Library, has been appointed a Knight of the Order of the Crown of Italy. Cavaliere Crestadoro is best known in this country for the great and beneficial influence he has had upon provincial bibliography and library work generally, but he is also a writer on financial and scientific subjects.

In Manchester, the award to the Chief Librarian was a matter of civic pride and the ensuing publicity resulted in the *Momus* article in the following year. The *Manchester Guardian* of 19 March 1878 recorded the event as follows:

> Dr. Andrea Crestadoro, the chief librarian of the Public Free Library, has been appointed by the King of Italy a knight of the Order of the Crown of Italy (Cavaliere dell'ordine della Corona d'Italia). Cavaliere Crestadoro is a native of Genoa, and before settling in England was professor of natural philosophy in the University of Turin, of which he is a graduate, He is the author of several works on bibliographic, financial, and scientific subjects.

What Crestadoro thought of the Corona d'Italia it is not recorded, but as he never broke his ties with Italy it is likely it was significant to him. He certainly did not lose time in acclaiming his new honour. Characteristically, in the French edition of his last published work, he adds Chevalier de la Couronne d'Italie to the usual credits of Professeur de Philosophie and Bibliothecaire de la Ville de Manchester.[345]

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[303] 'Our Album. A. Crestadoro', *Momus*

[304] Robert Winder, *Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration to Britain* (London: Abacus, 2005) p.187

[305] Sarah Wise, *The Italian Boy Murder and Grave-Robbery in 1830s* London (London: Pimloico, 2005)

[306] Lucio Sponza, *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Realities and Images* (Leicester: LUP, 1988)

[307] Winder, *Bloody Foreigners*, p.190

[308] Winder, *Bloody Foreigners* p. 91

[309] Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, p.59

[310] Michael Alpert, *London 1849 A Victorian Murder Story* (Harlow: Pearson, 2004) pp. 64-65

[311] Winder, *Bloody Foreigners*, p. 185

[312] Margaret J. Shaen (ed.), *Memorials of two sisters : Susanna and Catherine Winkworth* (London: Longmans, 1908) p. 92

[313] Shaen, *William Shaen*, p. 20

[314] *Edizione Nazionale degli scritti Giuseppe Mazzini: Epistolario di Giuseppe Mazzini* (Imola: Galeati, 1933) Volume xxxvii, VCCIX pp. 138 – 139

[315] Shaen, *William Shaen*, p. 71

[316] Ford Madox Ford (Hueffer), *Memories and Impressions*: *a study in atmospheres* (New York: Harper, 1911) p. 162

[317] Thayer, *The Life and Times of Cavour*, 1, pp. 49-50

[318] Stephen Massil, 'Immigrants, Refugees and Exiles: Foreign Librarians in Britain', *Focus,* 36:2 (2005), p.67

[319] Denis Reidy, 'Panizzi, Gladstone, Garibaldi and the Neapolitan prisoners', *Electronic British Library Journal* (2005)

[320] Miller, *Prince of Librarians*, p. 248

[321] Miller, *Prince of Librarians*, p. 253

[322] Miller, *Prince of Librarians*, p. 296

[323] Charles Lacaita, *An Italian Englishman Sir James Lacaita* (Grant Richards, 1933) Lord Rennell, 'Introduction', p. vii

[324] Lacaita, *An Italian Englishman*

[325] Bromley House, 'The count and the Porter who was promoted', bhlibrary.wordpress.com/2013/09/10/the-count-and-the-porter-who-was-promoted

[326] Iris Origo, *A Measure of Love* (Pantheon: 1957) p.209

[327] 'Romans and Hungarians Meeting at Bradford', *London Daily News* (Friday 20 July 1849)

[328] Neal Priestland, *The Letters of Count Ubaldo Marioni (1804-1886)* (Neal Priestland 2007 and 2015)

[329] Priestland, *The Letters of Count Ubaldo Marioni*, p. 1

[330] Priestland, *The Letters of Count Ubaldo Marioni*, p.1

[331] Priestland, *The Letters of Count Ubaldo Marioni*, p. 8

[332] I.C. Wright, *Dante Translated into English Verse* (London: Bohn, 1864) 3rd ed. pp. xv- xvi

[333] Thomas Alexander Lacey, *Wayfarer's Essays* (Oxford: OUP, 1934) p.111

[334] Fagan, *The Life of Sir Anthony Panizzi*, Vol. 2 p. 239

[335]Brooks, *Antonio Panizzi: Scholar and Patriot*, p. 162

[336] Janet Ross, *Leaves from Our Tuscan Kitchen, or, How to Cook Vegetables* (London: Dent, 1900)

[337] Alan Humphries, e-mail to author, 23 Nov 2004

[338] Samuel Smiles, *Men of Invention and Industry* (London: Murray, 1884) p. 179

[339] Michele Lessano, *Volere e Potere* (Firenze: Barbera, 1869)

[340] Lessano, *Volere*

[341] Carlo Arrivabene, *Italy Under Victor Emmanuel: A Personal Narrative*, Vol. 2 p.23-24

[342] Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa *The Leopard* (London: Everyman, 1991) p.159

[343] Lacaita, *An Italian Englishman*, p. 238

[344] Alan Humphries, e-mail to author, 23 Nov 2004

[345] Andrea Crestadoro, *Reforme de l'impot* (Paris: E.Dentu, 1878)

# Chapter Twelve: A Painful Work - The Troubled History of the Manchester Catalogue

> A painful work it is, I assure you, and more than difficult; wherein what toyle has to be taken as no man thinketh, so no man believeth, but that hath made the trial subjects.[346]

## The Free Library Movement

Manchester prides itself on having the first Public Library. In fact the title strictly belongs to Winchester, under the definition of libraries established under the 1850 Public Libraries and Museums Act.

William Ewart, MP for Liverpool, Joseph Brotherton, MP for Salford, and Edward Edwards of the BM, had pioneered the Free Library movement and Manchester strongly supported the cause. Indeed there is an apocryphal tale that it all started in a snowstorm in Manchester: 'In 1844 George Jackson and George Wallis, snowbound in the Royal Manchester Institution, talked by the fire about a lecture on "The Means of Improving Public Taste".'[347] They delivered the lecture on 25 November 1844, inspiring the Museums Act 1844, the forerunner of the 1850 Act.

The 1850 Act was very restrictive in scope: two-thirds of local ratepayers had to give their consent before the halfpenny rate for libraries could be raised and intitially this could not even be spent on books. A complex history of legislation ensued over the next decades to make the initial Act more workable.

During Crestadoro's lifetime the term used was Free rather than Public Libraries. This changed after much debate at the end of the century as 'Free' had connotations of being limited to the poor, and the whole ethos of the movement was provision for all.

## Manchester Free Library

Manchester was poised to take action as soon as the 'most cautious measure'[348] became law in August 1850. At the suggestion of John Watts, a meeting of influential men was held, the Mayor, John Potter, launched a subscription and £4,300 was raised for books. John Potter persuaded the Council to purchase the Hall of Science at Campfield for a bargain price of £1,200 pounds. (In 1840 it had cost £7,000 to build, the money raised by mechanics and artisans.) All this before the public meeting and appeal in January 1851.

Fig.27 Campfield Library Exterior

A Committee was appointed at this meeting, chaired by John Potter, and Edward Edwards was soon selected as first Chief Librarian. In this 'heartland of informed radicalism',[349] a strong Working Men's Committee of the Manchester Free Library formed and held its first meeting in February 1851.

More than £13,000 was eventually raised through these two committees, and more than 20,000 'hard working clerks and artisans'[350] contributed to this, the very people who would become the core of library users. In July 1852, arrangements were made to poll the ratepayers, which seems perilously late. What disaster and embarrassment if the vote had failed! The poll taken on 20 August 1852 showed there were 3,962 for and only 40 against and this from a register of potentially 12,500 voters. This turnout was regarded as a great victory. The Library Committee Minutes for 3 September 1852 note that the Council gave huge thanks to Sir John Potter for his 'sanguine optimism'.

## Oh! Glorious Trophy for My Native Town!

Only in Manchester would there be an epic poem to celebrate their first Free Library:

> The spark of poesy it generated in the mind of Mr. George Hatton wrought in him to such fine issues that he commemorated the inauguration in heroic verse extending to forty-eight pages of a 16mo pamphlet. It is thus entitled, The inauguration of the Manchester Free Library, September 2nd, 1852. A Poem by George Hatton, and the imprint reads 'Manchester: The Author, 6 and 7, Greenwood Street, Corporation Street, 1853'[351]

As well as this epic, the ceremonies of 2 September 1852 were recorded in detail in the press, official reports and in the accounts of those who attended. Newspapers across the country gave full accounts of attendance and speeches. *The Northern Whig* emphasised the evolving view of the library being for all social classes, not just to improve the workers:

> MANCHESTER FREE LIBRARY. Thursday, the Kingdom Cotton commenced a fresh conquest over the dark realms of Ignorance. The spacious, plain, but handsome halls of the Public Free Library of Manchester gave forth one of those hopeful signs of the Present, in which the political and social Future may be dearly and joyfully read. A library, whose doors are from this day to be thrown open without restriction to all classes of citizens, from the millionaire to the meanest artisan whose books are to be freely lent to and disseminated amongst all those who choose to borrow them, with no other restrictions whatever as to the social rank of the borrower, and with no other condition attached to the loan than fair usage, and punctual return, is, in this country, a novelty and a blessing which deserves to be especially commemorated.[352]

The subsequent success of the Campfield Reference and Lending Library, as well as the problems of the Campfield building and location, led to a network of branches, starting with Hulme and Ancoats branches in 1857. At first, these were in adapted buildings, shops or schools, but this soon changed to new buildings, designed for the purpose. Rochdale Road Branch in 1860 was the first of these in Manchester, and in the whole country.

## At the Forefront

Manchester was certainly the first major public library and was at the forefront with large collections, a wide range of services, printed catalogues, the collecting and reporting of statistics. The next cities to follow were Birmingham, Liverpool and Leeds. The opposition of ratepayers and councils meant provision of public libraries was patchy until the 1870 Education Act came in and stimulated growth.

John Potter, Thomas Baker, the Aldermen and the Councillors of the Library Committee, the Council, Sir Joseph Heron, the Town Clerk, James Crossley, representing between them powerful circles of merchants, manufacturers, Unitarians and literary men, controlled and shaped the structure and policies of the Free Libraries of Manchester.

The provisions of the 1850 Public Libraries and Museums Act allowed lay members to be appointed to the library committee. The first 'subscription' General Committee and the Sub Committees had included a wide range of non-council dignitaries, all 'well-known lovers of literature and science'[353] However, as soon as Campfield officially opened in September 1852 the Manchester Council took full control of the Library Committee: 'the appointment of lay members to the library committee was ignored, and the library was placed under the control of a committee consisting exclusively of members of the Council. In this respect Manchester was exceptional.'[354]

James Crossley was the main lay person to remain informally involved on an invitation basis.

## The First Servant of the Committee

The arrogance and authority of the Library Committee proved too much for the hot- tempered first Chief, Edward Edwards. Several members of the Committee were determined to get rid of Edwards, despite his years of zealous service in the establishment of the Manchester Library Service. They exerted all their powers in the painful episodes that led to his dismissal.

The Minutes record endless criticism of Edwards's habit of seclusion; his work and hours were monitored, his request for increases in his £200 salary refused and his plan for the catalogue rejected as 'elaborate and costly in character'.[355] The admonitions presented to Edwards hammer home again and again the message that he was a 'servant of the Committee'.

It is interesting to note there must have been some misgiving on the treatment of Edwards. Uniquely, in the Minutes for 11 July 1858, the names connected with the for and against votes that finally forced through his dismissal are crossed out (though still legible) and numbers put in instead.

The shocked and heartbroken Edwards, in panic at the loss of employment, appealed against the decision, refused the offered compensation of three months' salary and took legal advice. Pending the outcome he was allowed to supervise until his successor was appointed. He left on 29 October 1858 with a sum of £25 to tide him over until his claim was resolved. Manchester decided to pay up and he received £125 in December. However difficult Edwards had been, they had treated him shabbily.

## The Second Servant of the Committee

There were seven applicants for the post of Chief Librarian, all were interviewed on 11 October 1858. Robert Wilson Smiles, Secretary of the Lancashire Public Schools Association, who was well known to the Committee, and a Mr. Marshall from Southampton received five votes each. Poor Sir John Potter, worn out by these bitter events, had to give the deciding vote:

> Potter, who was seriously ill and perhaps even more reluctant than usual to take entire responsibility for anything, gave his casting vote regretfully for Smiles, saying 'I am afraid we are making a great mistake: we have no candidate before us equal in qualifications to Mr. Edwards.' Potter returned wearily home, took to his bed and died there, two weeks later, at the age of 43.[356]

Robert Smiles was the brother of the Samuel Smiles who soon was to become world famous for his book *Self Help*, published in 1859. Robert was one of the: 'quiverful of eleven children who survived infancy',[357] born in 1816 in the quiet Scottish town of Haddington. His hard working parents, strict Cameronians, a sect on the extreme edge of Calvinism, ran a shop on the high street.

From newspaper accounts it appears that prior to his post as Secretary he had been a bookseller at Blackburn. The business ended up in the bankruptcy court at the end of 1849.[358] (It is a strange thought that both the second and third Chief Librarians of Manchester were in court for debt.)

Smiles was known as an 'ardent educationalist'. As Chief Librarian he set up a reading room for boys, alerted Sunday School teachers to new additions and, in response to a petition from schools, built up an educational section at Campfield which consisted of: 'all sorts of stuff which ought rather to be in an educational museum'.[359] He ensured the papers of the Lancashire Public Schools Association were preserved, now a valuable resource.

Smiles clearly felt the priorities should be for the working people; in looking at the book budget he declared to the Committee: 'it is recommended that the wants of the more indigent portion of the Visitors should be regarded as having the strongest claim' and that the best boon would be to purchase *Encyclopedia Britannica* which was just being issued.

He occasionally sounds weak in his dealings with staff, and strident in his denunciation of works he objected to, perhaps his strict Calvinism surfacing. He reacted with almost hysterical disgust to the offer of a donation of *Fatherless Fanny*:

> you will find in the topic and ideas presented a gratuitous traffic in gross indecency although offensive words and phrases may not be dealt with. If the book had been unexceptionable as regards topics, its style and character, which are beneath contempt, would have rendered it inadmissible[360]

The Minutes show most of Smiles' efforts to have been spent on the practical side of libraries: the buildings with their problematic lights, stoves, polluted atmosphere, the overcrowding of the public rooms, damaged books, endless staffing issues, interviews with angry readers and the various tasks the Committee set him. Similar patterns are there for Edwards and Crestadoro, but the Archives indicate that Smiles did not receive the huge volume of inquiries from librarians and scholars that came to Crestadoro.

Smiles tried his best to sort out the thorny problem of the Reference Library Catalogue and he did have good ideas on indexing approaches. He was no expert, however, and had the honesty to admit this, leading to the decision to employ outside help and thus bringing Crestadoro to Manchester in 1862.

As Sir John Potter had feared, Smiles was not remarkable as Chief Librarian. After seven years it is not surprising that Smiles decided to move on. The idea lingers that he had reached the limit of enduring the Committee. His resignation letter of 29 July 1863 is formulaic but perhaps with the tone of someone who is tired of trying his best: 'Accept my sincere thanks for the uniform kindness I have received at your hands during my tenure of Office and for the indulgence with which you have regarded my imperfections and shortcomings in the discharge of my duties.'

He took up a position in London as editor of *Railway News*. Twenty-six years later the loyal *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* of 31 May 1890 gave him the only substantial obituary I can trace. Library historians do not linger long on Smiles, a dutiful but uninspiring Chief Librarian whose heart lay elsewhere.

## The Third Servant of the Committee

Crestadoro had been employed by the Free Library Committee to produce the Reference Library Catalogue. He started on this in 1862 and delivered it on time and within budget, an impressive achievement and an incredible relief to the Committee. 26 April 1864 must have been a red letter day for Crestadoro for on this date he announced completion of the Reference Library Catalogue, and the Library Committee agreed with the Campfield Sub Committee that Crestadoro should be the new Chief Librarian. They resolved to recommend this to the Council.

At the Council meeting on 4 May 1864, Crestadoro was formally appointed as Chief Librarian at the salary of £250 per annum: his gateway to a new career and the final phase of his life. The coverage in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* for 5 May 1864 shows how highly Crestadoro was regarded. Plus the journalistic dig that the copies of the catalogue were still mysteriously en route:

> APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF LIBRARIAN. The Free Libraries committee recommended the appointment of Professor Crestadoro to the office of chief librarian, rendered vacant by the resignation of Mr. Smiles, at salary of £250 per annum. Councillor King moved the confirmation of the recommendation. When Mr. Smiles resigned, the committee, he said, thought it desirable not to fill up the vacancy until the completion of the catalogue to the reference library. The time had now arrived when the committee deemed it desirable that the situation should be again filled. The work which Professor Crestadoro had been engaged was completed; and he expected to have been able to lay on the table copies of the catalogue, which, however, were inaccessible somewhere between the railway station and the Free Library. The committee had been impressed with the great ability shown by Professor Crestadoro, and particularly with his talent for organisation, which was one of the most valuable qualities that could be possessed by chief librarian in library which was increasing daily. Councillor Ingham seconded the motion. Councillor Marshall was glad to hear the remarks which had fallen from Councillor King, because he was in some measure instrumental in bringing Professor Crestadoro to the assistance of the committee. The motion was agreed to.

It was a huge tribute to Crestadoro that the Committee did not rush to replace Smiles and did not advertise for other candidates. Smiles too had helped by offering to stay until his successor was appointed. By delaying for eight months, the Committee enabled Crestadoro to finish his contract and move into the post. Presumably, Crestadoro had been given the hint that his future was secure in Manchester for on 17 March 1864 he and Margaret Elizabeth Chittleburgh were married at the Old Church St Pancras, London.

Crestadoro remained thereafter on good terms with the Committee, built up a dedicated team of staff and was renowned for his flexible and liberal policies. His reputation as an expert librarian, bibliophile and scholar brought Manchester credit. His index catalogues became the model for most of the Free Libraries until the end of the century.

## Crestadoro's Life in Manchester

Crestadoro died in post in Manchester on 7 April 1879. The next chapters cover various aspects of his life in Manchester as Chief Librarian. This chapter continues by outlining the troubled history of the Manchester catalogues and how Crestadoro solved the problem in the period 1862 to 1864.

## The Problems of Free Library Catalogues

Campfield opened its doors to the public on Monday 6 September 1852: the celebrations were over and the Manchester Free Library Committee had serious problems to confront.

Amongst them was the contentious issue of producing catalogues for the Campfield Reference Library, the Campfield Lending Library and later for the new Branches.

As already described there was endless debate generally over the nature and form of library catalogues best suited for the new readerships and the overwhelming increase in publications.

In all the volumes of theory, rules and analysis that have poured out ever since the mid nineteenth century, there is surprising consistency in the issues addressed. Points raised in Panizzi's time are still provoking argument today with pretty much the same range of responses. The truest line might be the innocent one from Margaret Wicks that: 'The last word in library cataloguing has not yet been said'.[361]

The form of the catalogue itself, whether classified, that is, structured into classes of subjects, or dictionary, with entries for author, title and subject listed alphabetically, was one major debate. Another was the balance between the practical and the ideal in producing bibliographic descriptions. All this bibliographic complexity had then to be made understandable to the reader to support their searches without confusing them – a difficult task.

The Free Libraries needed to enable readers, many of whom would be unfamiliar with finding books, to know what was available and how to ask for it. Generally there were no open access shelves for browsing until the twentieth century and only newspapers and some reference material would have been there to hand. Readers had to find the right information from the catalogues to fill in the requests for books, or to discover what was in the collection.

The catalogues had to be printed so they could be sold for home consultation and available as multiple copies in the libraries. This brought in problems of cost and updating.

The Free Librarians also needed to know what other libraries held and from the start they shared their print catalogues. A standing complaint against the BM from the early provincial librarians was that their catalogue was not available to the nation, existing only in the Reading Room in manuscript form.

## The Manchester Free Library Catalogues, 1851-1858

The Manchester Free Library Committee, on its first sitting on Friday 10 January 1851 appointed Sub Committees to deal with the priorities of their planning, buildings, books, regulations and finance, thinking perhaps that catalogues would be a minor affair. If so, they were soon disillusioned. On 4 December 1851 an additional Sub Committee was set up: ‘to superintend the cataloguing and the arranging of the library’. Laymen were invited on board. A year later on 8 January 1852, with James Crossley now as Chair, they resolved: ‘to consider and report upon the best principle for making the Catalogue, and to draw up for the Librarian a table of direction for making the said catalogue.’

On 22 January 1852, Dr. Watts proposed a duel between Edwards and Crossley, and the detested James Prince Lee, Bishop of Manchester, to decide on classified versus alphabetical system. Edwards won the classified debate in the absence of the Bishop and was even given temporary help ‘to engage a fit person to assist in preparing titles for the Catalogue’.

The references continue in the Minutes as the Sub Committee sends in its reports across the years, a roller coaster of optimistic forecasts and substantial delays familiar to anyone who has been involved in cataloguing. An increasing note of desperation is evident. There was great pride in the large Reference Library Collection, the result of the massive fund raising efforts as well as the expertise of Crossley and Edwards in purchasing the books. But the lack of a catalogue had become an embarrassment.

By December 1853, the Committee was worried about the delays. Alderman Shuttleworth, Councillors McDougall and Thackray were directed to look at the cost of a catalogue ‘prepared in a simplified form’.There was some backtracking on the original scheme, for on 15 June 1855 Edwards was asked to report on the preparation and costs, including printing, of alternative catalogues.

Edwards could not complete his catalogue to the timescale required. To his fury, the Committee proposed in 1857 that he should follow the model produced by ‘a neighbouring proprietary library’, The Portico. Edwards lost all sense of tact, describing the meeting as: ‘a most pitiable exhibition of

crass ignorance and puerile vanity'.[362] As Thomas Greenwood commented:

> It is not a wise thing for a librarian to tell his committee that they do not know anything of books or practical library administration. Such a statement might be true in some cases, but the librarian should lock the knowledge in his own heart, and refuse to let it be drawn from him on any pretext. The first librarian of the first municipal library under the Act of 1850 overlooked this prudent course, and suffered in consequence.[363]

Both Edwards and the Committee agreed at the 11 December 1857 meeting that there was an 'absolute and pressing necessity for a printed catalogue' as manuscript catalogues were 'cumbrous, inconvenient and expensive' but there was still conflict on the form of the catalogue. A special meeting was held on 28 December 1857 to determine yet again 'the kind of Catalogue necessary for the purposes of the Reference Department.'

By 1 April 1858, Edwards and his staff had produced 8,847 title slips, not even covering a third of the collection. Over the next month the campaign started to force Edwards to resign.

## The Manchester Free Library Committee and the Manchester Catalogues, 1858-1862

A new Reference Library Cataloguing Sub Committee was set up, the usual approach to a specific problem or development, with Harry Rawson, who had been Edwards' most relentless enemy, in the chair. At the first meeting on 14 March1859, other models were added to the mix, and Smiles was directed to produce a specimen index.

Unsurprisingly, looking at the incoherence of all this, the next few months show nothing but muddle over the subject divisions and, tellingly, on 27 June 1859: 'After a lengthened conversation the question of classification was left over for further consideration'.

On 27 July 1859, only Harry Rawson attended and 'spent above two hours in collating different schemes of classification'. The report on the Reference Library Catalogue was discussed on 29 August 1859. The Committee was clearly overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task but still struggled nobly; the subject index should be as a 'copious Encylopaedical concordance' to contents of the Library :'while in it no pretension is made to the scientific accuracy assumed in elaborate classification, it may be made to serve some of the most useful purposes of a classified system'.

Smiles wrote a warm letter to Edwards on 6 October 1859, assuring him that he would always be welcome to use the Manchester collections and thanking him for 'the magnanimous kindness which I have received at your hands for the last twelve months'. He also stated with his usual optimism that:

> The plan of the catalogue is at length settled, it is to be on the model of the list (modestly so-called) just out, of the books of reference in the Reading-Room of the British Museum —with this difference that we shall have six alphabetical groups and six indices of subjects. I can afford to say to you that I am gratified by this result for various reasons, and among others that it is favourable to rapidity of preparation for the press.[364]

The Minutes of 6 October show that this plan had only been agreed after long debate and changing from one scheme to another and back again, as well as proposals for keeping the number of subdivisions down and dispensing with an index of author names. Smiles' confidence was ill founded. In December 1859, the expert Dr Beard was brought in to revise the proofs for Theology and Philosophy (the only classes so far being attempted).

Smiles produced a long report on the state of the catalogues for the 17 May 1861 Committee

meeting, dejected that there was no end in sight. He believed the plans for the Reference Library catalogue were impractical: 'I have been compelled – with extreme reluctance – to come to the conclusion that the preparation of the copy and its publication within a reasonable time is incompatible, unless additional assistance is obtained.'

In July 1861 a Mr Dawtry was appointed to prepare the rest of the Reference Library Catalogue. He was engaged at 2 guineas per week, hours 9-6 with an hour for dinner and a youth to help him. Dawtry decided to start transcribing afresh, dates were dropped from descriptions but on 30 September 1861 Dawtry resigned over an unauthorised absence of a week in August. He wrote that he 'cannot expect the Committee will overlook this' but offered to finish the cataloguing of the tracts. Despite his mention on 24 Feb 1862 that 'my object throughout has been to curtail the titles as much as possible', Dawtry still had not completed the tracts by April 1862, had been absent again and the Committee dispensed with his services. Smiles had gallantly managed to produce the Lending Library catalogue but was still working on the name index to it in March 1862.

Smiles had done his best to tackle the question of the Reference Library catalogue but the Committee eventually abandoned the project as too slow and costly. The situation had grown desperate and had to be resolved.

On 2 May 1862, the Committee with Councillor John King in the Chair, Thomas Baker, Alderman Bowker and Councillor Thompson, decided on the advice of James Crossley who was there by invitation, to seek outside help. Advertisements were placed both nationally and locally through *the Athen*aeum, the *Critic*, *Notes and Queries*, the *Saturday Review*, the *Manchester Courier*, the *Manchester Examiner*, the *Manchester Guardian* and others. The Committee cast its net wide, determined to find the right person.

## Suitable Applicants

Here is Crestadoro in May 1862, sitting in his lodging at 19 Great Ormond Street, London. If he reviewed his life in England he has a record of valiant tilts at science and invention, ingenious and sometimes dodgy attempts at a making a living, established credentials with Sampson Low, a pamphlet on cataloguing and a recent work published in French that he believes will forward the new Italy.

He also has prospects of marriage with a neighbour, if only he could gain a settled and respectable post. He has applied for whatever comes up, for example, the post of secretary of the Russell Institution just down the road, and he has splendid references from Sampson Low and William Shaen.

He consults *The Athenaeum* on Saturday, 10 May 1862, running his eye along the usual offers of tuition for young ladies, rustic drawing classes, cramming for military and civil service examinations, society publications, exhibitions, aids for mental derangement, library subscriptions and then:

> WANTED, an efficient and experienced
> PERSON, to PREPARE a CATALOGUE of the BOOKS
> in the Reference Department of the MANCHESTER FREE
> LIBRARY. The titles are estimated at about 50,000. --Applications, with testimonials as to character and competency, and stating amount of remuneration required, to be addressed 'To the Chairman of the Free Library Committee, Town Hall, Manchester," before the 1st of June.

And so Crestadoro puts pen to paper, carefully composing his application to Manchester Free Library Committee to sort out the catastrophe of their catalogue.

## Letters and Testimonials

Crestadoro's first letter,[365] expressing his interest, is admirably to the point, gives substantial proof of his experience and demonstrates a clear understanding of cost being a significant factor:

> In support of my application I beg to state that I am a graduate of the University of Turin, 48 years of age. For the last 13 years I have resided in England. I am a good general scholar, and the author of two Italian, one French and two English books. My knowledge of the modern languages comprises in addition to the Italian my native tongue, English, French, Spanish and German.
>
> Having been from an early age a reader in several of the principal public libraries both in England and on the continent I have acquired an extensive knowledge of books of every kind and a practical acquaintance with the subject of catalogues. In reference to this point I have the honour of submitting to your notice with this application a copy of a treatise published by me under the title of the 'Art of making catalogues of libraries,' – also a copy of the 'British Catalogue of books published during the year 1858' one of a series of catalogues which I have actually prepared for Mr Low the Publisher. I also enclose copy of testimonials from that gentleman and from Mr W Shaen M.A. Fellow of University College London.
>
> I feel confident that I should be able to prepare expeditiously and correctly an alphabetical catalogue on permanent basis so as to be creditable to your Library not only as a means of reference but also as to its mechanical arrangement which would allow, if desired, of its being printed as fast as it is prepared without any extra expense, whilst at the same time it would admit of constant additions without interfering with its alphabetical arrangement.
>
> I beg to add in conclusion that I would be content with a renumeration of the rate of three guineas a week and would be prepared to give an estimate of the time which would be required to complete the work as soon as I could see the present arrangement of the books or of their titles.

He included the testimonial from Shaen (the reference to the 'last nine years' does not necessarily indicate when they first met, as the reference might well have been used in earlier applications.):

> I have known Mr Crestadoro for the last nine years and have formed a high opinion of his personal character, his strict integrity and his unwearied and ever-willing industry. He is a Gentleman in whom you might place implicit confidence, and with whom you would find it always agreeable to have personal intercourse.

The Sampson Low reference was the same one supplied for Crestadoro's application to the Russell Institution in 1859.

## The Near Return of Edward Edwards

There were twenty-nine applicants. The Cataloguing Sub Committee with James Crossley as the expert advisor met again on 16 July1862 to read the letters. Six were selected, A. H. Bleek, Crestadoro, J. D. Haigh, Edwin Jones, Robert Roberts, and Edward Edwards who offered to do the work for £210.

At a Special meeting on 23 July the Sub Committee thought initially that Bleek, Haigh, Crestadoro and Edwards might be interviewed but then decided instead to recommend acceptance of Edwards' proposal to the Committee. The Committee agreed it would be desirable to appoint Edwards, but referred the recommendation to the Council to see if: 'There were any circumstances arising out of his former connection with the Library which would mitigate against his being engaged to draw up the catalogue.'

In a dramatic turn of events the Council refused to countenance the return of this difficult ex-employee. As recorded by the *Manchester Guardian* of 6 August this was:

> because of Mr. Edwards's known insubordination, and general impractability of temper ; because offers had been received from several other gentlemen, highly recommended and much more eligible than Mr. Edwards ; and because of the strong opposition to Mr. Edwards which was manifested by more than half the members of the Committee.

Following this reversal, the Free Library Committee hastily contacted the other applicants. Bleek, Crestadoro and Haigh were called to interview and their applications are preserved in the Manchester Library Archives

## Crestadoro's Plan

All three candidates were shown round on 20 August and then asked to write up their plans for the catalogue before the Committee finalised its decision. This is an admirable selection approach and still represents the best recruitment practice, not relying on interviews or references alone but giving each candidate the same opportunity to observe and comment on the real situation.

Crestadoro came into his own, winning hands down with his proposal sent the next day from Clarke's Inn on 58 Deansgate, near the Campfield Library. Crestadoro was firm in his approach, did not ask the Committee to decide a catalogue policy, posed no questions but gave a detailed and concise proposal; the issue of the classified approach was simply resolved. He also identified mistakes in the existing entries, demonstrating through this an admirable eye for detail. He must have revisited the Reference Library before sending in his letter; it was open until 9 pm and he was only a step away on Deansgate. His assiduity paid off and his business plan must have appealed strongly to the Committee. Here was a man who knew the value of what he was offering, based on real achievements that his references from Sampson Low and William Shaen supported:

> I have considered the object of the intended catalogue of the Free Library as you explained it to me and have examined the existing conditions of the Library as regards this subject, and I now beg to submit to you the conclusions which I have arrived at.
>
> I consider that to properly fulfill the intentions of the committee, the catalogue requires to be made in three parts consisting of the titles, of an index, and of a classification.[366]

Crestadoro's proposal for classification was no monumental theoretical scheme: it would emerge seamlessly from the indexing. Nothing here to panic the Committee.

The other candidates, James D. Haig and A.H. Black, offered opinions on catalogues, Haig at some length, and wrote of their great experience but without any specifics. They focused on the critical question of whether a classed or alphabetical catalogue should be preferred, but unlike Crestadoro offered no neat compromise. Haig hesitated to offer an opinion, came down on the side of the alphabetical catalogue but was perfectly happy to go with whatever the Committee wanted and they seemed to favour a classified catalogue. A.H. Black was more succinct but followed much the same

line. He avoided specifics and merely offered to describe his ideas verbally at interview. Unlike Crestadoro he requested the services of a copying clerk. As well as not having firm ideas or plans, both were unconvincing on the timescale.

Altogether the interviews went on over three days. Councillors King, Bowker and Thompson held various sessions, sometimes all three of them were on the panel, sometimes two and sometimes one to one with the candidate. Smiles was not involved: the Committee ran the Free Libraries. King had a 'lengthened interview' with Professor Crestadoro on 20 August and then King and Bowker interviewed him again on 21 August. It is not clear if Crestadoro alone was interviewed on the last day. After this extremely thorough process Crestadoro was offered the contract.

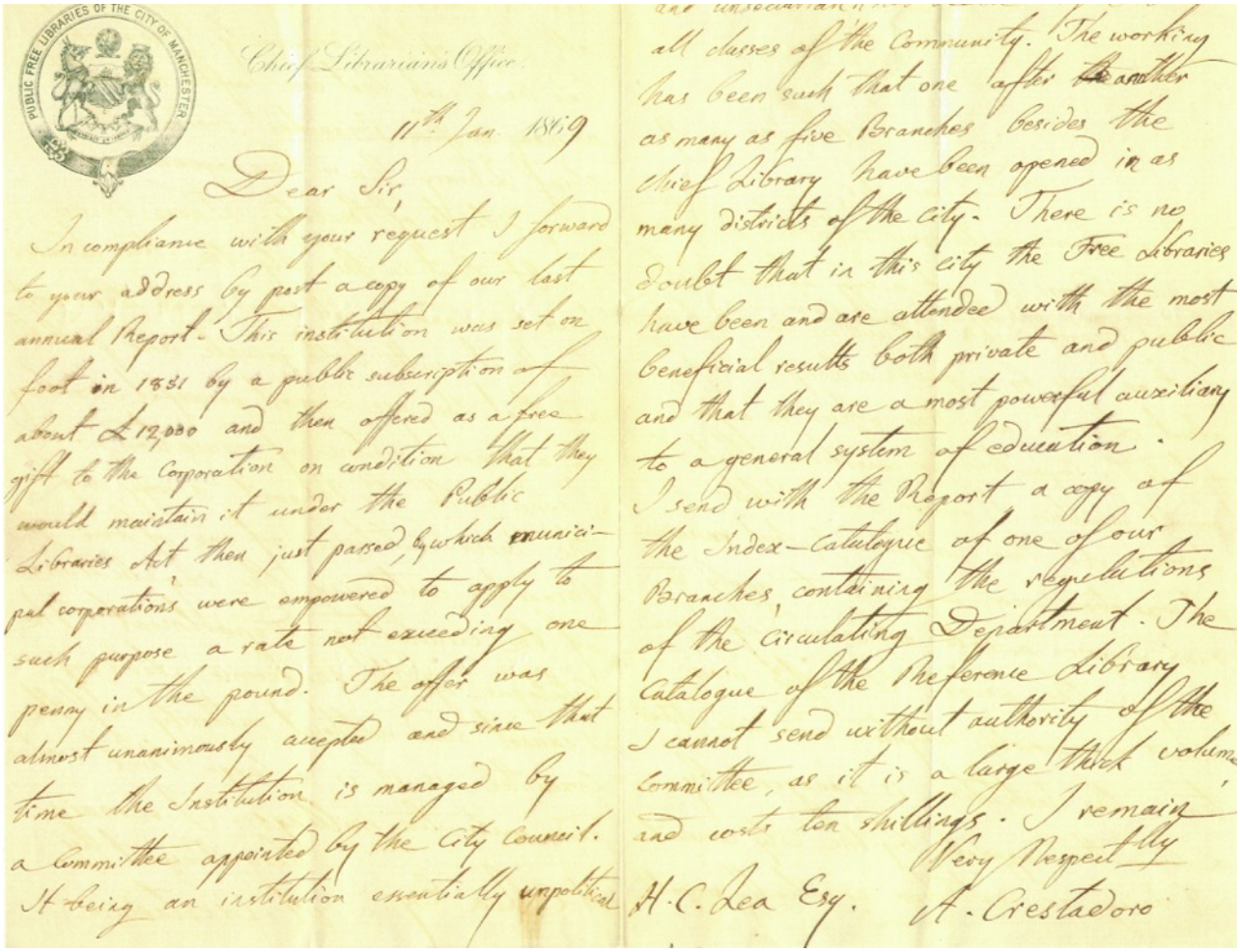
## The Offer

There was much negotiation about the terms as Crestadoro had suggested a sliding scale of 2d. per title if the catalogue was ready for the printer within two years, 3d. for eighteen months and 4d. for one year and one month. As N.K. Firby commented, this was interesting as: 'an early attempt at "incentive payments"' but: 'The Committee were too cautious to agree to these terms'.[367] Crestadoro had already offered to modify his unit rate charge to a total sum of £525 but on being offered the appointment, accepted three guineas a week with the balance of £197 to be paid at the end of the two-year contract or at once if completed earlier.

The Committee having made its decision was assiduous in following up references. William Shaen was tracked down on holiday at Eastbourne to confirm his opinion. The tone of his letter was warm and affectionate. Shaen took pains to name Crestadoro as a friend rather than a client or acquaintance and ended with recalling mutual social contacts, surely a message that Crestadoro should be welcomed to the club.

> I am very glad to hear that you are thinking of engaging my friend Prof Crestadoro to make the Catalogue of the Reference Department of your Free Library. I can entirely confirm the testimonial I gave him some time ago. He is remarkable for patient + conscientious industry + his knowledge of books is considerable. I suppose you have seen the Catalogue he has made for Sampson Low & Co the Publishers. His English is not always quite accurate and if there is any description written to be composed it would be well to get it looked over by one of the Committee. His handwriting is not good, but it is very legible. I presume your Catalogue will be printed. I do not know that I can say more than that if it were my own private matter I should unhesitatingly entrust it to him.
>
> I recollect having the pleasure of sitting next to you at Sir James Watt's a few years ago when the … met in your City. I have recently had business with your Mr W Heron[368]

The comment on Crestadoro's handwriting is amusing given that Crestadoro's hand is outstandingly clear and neat. Few others in the Manchester Archives are as fine. How handwriting can be very legible but not good is a mystery. Here is a sample letter from Crestadoro to Henry Charles Lea.[369]


PUBLIC FREE LIBRARIES OF THE CITY OF MANCHESTER

Chief Librarian's Office

11th Jan 1869

Dear Sir,

In compliance with your request I forward to your address by post a copy of our last annual Report. This institution was set on foot in 1851 by a public subscription of about £12,000 and then offered as a free gift to the Corporation on condition that they would maintain it under the Public Libraries Act then just passed, by which municipal corporations were empowered to apply to such purpose a rate not exceeding one penny in the pound. The offer was almost unanimously accepted and since that time the Institution is managed by a Committee appointed by the City Council. It being an institution essentially unpolitical all classes of the Community. The working has been such that one after another as many as five Branches besides the Chief Library have been opened in as many districts of the City. There is no doubt that in this city the Free Libraries have been and are attended with the most beneficial results both private and public and that they are a most powerful auxiliary to a general system of education.

I send with the Report a copy of the Index-Catalogue of one of our Branches, containing the regulations of the Circulating Department. The Catalogue of the Reference Library I cannot send without authority of the Committee, as it is a large thick volume and costs ten shillings. I remain

Very Respectfully

H. C. Lea Esq. A. Crestadoro

Fig.28 Letter to Charles Henry Lea

Shaen's reference was eminently satisfactory and Crestadoro was formally appointed on 2 September 1862. He was granted expenses of £6.0.0.

[346] W.A. Munford, *Edward Edwards 1812-1886 Portrait of a Librarian* (London: LA,1963) p.126

[347] MA, Centenary Book 1852-1952, Letter from Ernest A. Savage to Charles Nowell, 1952

[348] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.2

[349] Goffin (ed.), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, p.136

[350] Thomas Kelly, *A History of Public Libraries in Great Britain 1845-1965* (London: LA, 1973) p. 27

[351] Credland*, The Manchester Public Free Libraries* p. 27 and 29

[352] *The Northern Whig* (Tuesday 7 September 1852)

[353] 'The Manchester Free Library', *The Manchester Guardian* (28 January 1878)

[354] Kelly, *A History of Public Libraries*, p.41

[355] MA, Committee Minutes October 5 1855

[356] Munford, *Edward Edwards*, p.138

[357] Aileen Smiles, *Samuel Smiles and His Surroundings* (London: Hale, 1956) p.17

[358] The British Library Newspaper Archive, www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

[359] CUSTOS VERITAS, 'Letters on our Affairs'

[360] MA, Out Letters 25 March 1859

[361] Wicks, *The Italian Exiles in London*, p.153

[362] Greenwood, *Edward Edwards* p.118

[363] Greenwood, *Edward Edwards* p.118

[364] Greenwood, *Edward Edwards* p. 120

[365] MA, In Letter 1862/50

[366] MA, In Letter 1862/57

[367] N.K. Firby, 'Andrea Crestadoro, 1808-1879 Chief Librarian, Manchester Public Libraries, 1864-1879' *The Manchester Review,* 12:1, 19-25

[368] MA, In Letter 1862/58

[369] Rare Book and Manuscripts Library University of Pennsylvania, Lea Papers, Andrea Crestadoro to Henry Charles Lea 1869

# Chapter Thirteen: Crestadoro Brings the Sunshine

> A complimentary copy of the printed catalogue of the Reference Library compiled by Dr. Crestadoro, had arrived from Manchester. The sun had obviously burst through the dark cataloguing clouds there and none too soon.[370]

## First Report

Our own age is notorious for massive computer projects that rarely complete as planned: library catalogues were a Victorian equivalent. Crestadoro started in September 1862 and finished in April 1864. To appreciate the scale of his achievement, working alone he produced a catalogue of nearly 1,000 closely printed pages, encompassing around 30,000 works and 57,000 entries. His contract cost Manchester ratepayers three guineas a week for his time and a balance of £197 at the end of the contract. How did he do this?

Crestadoro took the lead both in the original project and in production of various catalogues in the years that followed. He was totally confident in his approach and in general merely reported progress to the Committee, carrying on without too much interference. Crestadoro had strong cataloguing principles, but when forced to make changes he accepted them tactfully.

Crestadoro's enthusiasm for his project is palpable; from the start he inundated the Cataloguing Sub Committee with reports, samples and discourses.[371] He met with Councillors John King and Thompson on 22 and 26 September 1862 and:

> Mr Crestadoro suggested that the Catalogue should be prepared in accordance with the rules published by the Smithsonian Institution with certain modifications which he would venture to propose and which he would explain in a report he would present to the

> Committee He further suggested that he should print specimen pages of the Catalogue and Index illustrating the Rules in questions.

True to his word, on 10 October Crestadoro presented his report to the Cataloguing Sub Committee, three beautifully printed pages and sample slips. These have been preserved in the Minutes Book as *Plan for the formation and arrangement of the intended Catalogue of the Reference Department*. This almost forms a supplement to *The Art of Making Catalogues* and is altogether a rare find in the documentation of the Free Libraries.

Anyone familiar with cataloguing would recognise the issues Crestadoro deals with and the terms he uses, apart from a concept of 'appellant title' which I think is pure Crestadoro. Anyone unfamiliar with cataloguing would get a glimpse of the intricacies of the bibliographic world. However much cataloguers toil to produce rules, or as some see them, guidelines to cover all contingencies, publications inevitably morph into undreamt of variations.

It must have been quite hard for the Cataloguing Sub Committee to follow all the points, but Crestadoro took care to provide the practical evidence and walk them through. His exposition would have been impressive and reassuring.

All this had happened within the first quarter of Crestadoro's appointment. Used as they were to delay and prevarication on the cataloguing front, as well as confused explanations from the likes of Dawtry, the Committee would have felt they had found a safe pair of hands. Crestadoro did not let them down with his plan. He was happily engaged on 'improvement': the beloved word that characterised his patents now occurs frequently in these plans and reports.

## Plan

The main difficulty that had beleaguered the Committee was eliminated, and the solution explained in one short sentence in the last paragraph of the 10 October report: 'As to the classified list this will be as it were an Index to the Index bringing together all the headings of a like class. A Specimen of such a list cannot be found until the catalogue has made considerable progress.'

Classification emerges from the indexing, rather than starting off with theoretical divisions and subdivisions with the problem of prioritising which class is treated first.

It was unfair for Manchester readers interested in technology to wait until Theology and Philosophy (the least popular subjects as the Campfield statistics revealed) were completed, as was the case prior to Crestadoro.

It is remarkable in this short paper how much ground Crestadoro covered, innovating new principles and applying them practically.

His idea for the layout for authors hints at his ideas on authority control: another first with which he has been credited.

Anonymous works had caused Panizzi many difficulties. Crestadoro typically took an approach of simplifying all this by his concept of an 'appellant title' which can be used for a commonly known name for a book as well as for anonymous works. This seems to be an innovation by Crestadoro and one which is now echoed in modern cataloguing both by the uniform title approach for books and for keytitles for serials. Crestadoro is firmly on the side of taking not the first but the first significant word of an anonymous title for the entry, very much in line with his common sense approach.

Without going deeper into the cataloguing theories, the main point to be noted is that Crestadoro's

rationale in deciding the structure of his catalogue is based on how readers actually think of books and so on how they search for them. If a reader knows a book as '*Adam Bede*', then there should be an entry. Crestadoro aimed in his catalogue to give multiple entry points and to spare the reader muddle. Generally his solutions were imaginative and sensible.

Crestadoro added further explanation in his presentation on 10 October, which is valuable for indicating how much he considered the needs of ordinary readers: 'It is also useful to the embarrassed or inexperienced reader whom it may assist to understand correctly & clearly the character of the book of which the title is before him, a task to him difficult when the title contains a variety of matters.'

This refers to Crestadoro's wish to give a subject heading under each author, preceding the title. The Committee overruled this proposal but the statement helps to understand Crestadoro's insistence on a subject index and his innovation of adding notes to the full entries, all to guide the reader.

The Sub Committee also insisted on a running number instead of a keyword for the index reference to the main entry. Apart from these modifications, Crestadoro's plan was accepted.

After taking the trouble to clarify his methods and plan, Crestadoro concentrated on keeping them up to date on his progress.

## Setback and Progress

Crestadoro reported his first major setback to the Cataloguing Sub Committee on 14 October 1862. Like Dawtry before him he found previously written slips unusable: 'it actually takes me more time to correct the slips than to write out new ones from the book.' The sample slips of his predecessors which he included in his report, are still present in the Minutes book. It is not surprising that Crestadoro rejected the very mixed bunch they represent.

Crestadoro explained that he would still look through the rejected slips: 'on the ground that some point might escape me which may not have escaped the previous compiler.' This seems highly unlikely. It is, however, a great example of Crestadoro's tact in dealing with the Committee. The thought was bound to please the Committee who had paid for this work from Edwards, Dr. Beard and Dawtry.

He must have pleased them even more by reporting he had already looked through the slips and transcribed over 1,200 titles himself. Crestadoro proved his statement that:

'I do not mind an additional, where I expected a diminished labour, as long as it is conducive to the greater perfection of the work I am engaged in.'

By 2 December 1862, Crestadoro reported he had covered 5,800 titles and had started on the volumes of tracts. This had doubled to 11,800 by 27 January 1863 and Crestadoro estimated printing could start in about four months. He was accurate for by the end of June, 26, 500 titles were ready for the press and tenders sent out. The Committee excitedly debated the three categories of copies: ordinary copies with the edges cut, large paper copies with trimmed edges and the presentation copies: 'Hand made - full calf, lettered, Palin, edges cut, the boards to have metallic borders on all sides.'

Printing continued in batches whilst Crestadoro continued preparing entries. He reported on 18 November 1863 that 496 pages had been produced, as well as a significant change made:

> Following out the suggestions of Mr Crossley, I have compiled and given at the proper

> places in as compact form as consistent with the necessary fullness, the contents of the Tracts, the Harleian Miscellany, the Pamphlets and other important collections. This will make the Catalogue unique in its kind and more generally saleable, and I would submit a suggestion to have it published through a London House.

## More Innovations

Crestadoro had expounded the value of contents information in *The Art of Making Catalogues* and, as mentioned previously, one of his unique contributions to information science was the inclusion of article titles for periodicals, multi volume works and conference literature. He was the first person to include table of contents information in a general catalogue.

Crossley's approach for the analytical description of antiquarian and scholarly tracts would therefore have been attractive to him. These two types of content information make the Reference Library Catalogue splendidly unique.

Another of Crestadoro's innovations in the Reference Library Catalogue was the addition of notes, something he would have been familiar with from Sampson Low's *Publishers' Circular*. Notes had been used in the catalogue of the New York Mercantile Library in 1837; these tended to be substantial quotations from mainstream reviews. Crestadoro wrote his own.

Crestadoro's notes were both helpful to the reader and ensured the Library had adequate information to avoid buying the same item twice. He explained this in his introduction to the Reference Library Catalogue. Specific fields for notes are defined in modern catalogue records but none of these encompass explanatory comments on the book itself as Crestadoro occasionally gives, especially where a title is ambiguous.

In his 1877 handbook, Axon mentions with approval notes used at the Boston Free Libraries which 'form capital guides to the study of the special topics to which they relate'. Although Crestadoro's notes did not go as far as this there had probably been discussion between Axon and Crestadoro on the pros and cons of such an approach: 'the inquirer directed to *the* authority on the subject he was 'looking up.' The young especially waste many valuable hours over second-rate books, simply because there 'is no one to tell them which is best.'[372]

Here's one example of a Crestadoro note:

> The Present Operation of the Act of Parliament of July 1819, commonly called Mr. Peel's Bill. pp. 52. Lond 1830. 8vo. The writer's object is to show how the present distress in the trading and agricultural community arises from the operation of Mr. Peel's Bill on the Currency.

The notes themselves also show how thorough Crestadoro was in examining the books. He gives no source for the notes as the New York Mercantile Library did in its catalogue, so he must have written them himself. He gave himself significant additional work in taking this approach, adding to the pressure of his deadline, and of course there was no financial gain for him in this. Under the terms of his contract, presumably there was a potential loss of money if he went beyond two years.

Modern automated systems link together the sort of bibliographic data that Crestadoro gave in his notes, such as other editions, reprints and continuations. Crestadoro was right in taking the pains he did to enrich his catalogue and in the twenty first century his wisdom in giving readers additional comments on the book's coverage or angle, is echoed by projects to link bibliographic records to Amazon inside the cover information or equivalent.

## Printing

On 22 December 1863, Crestadoro announced to the Library Committee that he had reached a major stage with the completion of printing of the Principal Entries: 'Having returned to the printer all the sheets corrected I intend to pass the Xmas holidays in London and at the same time to continue preparing the second part in which I am now about halfway.'

Printing, book binding, publishing were all separate trades and, as recorded in the 30 March 1864 Minutes, it was on Crestadoro recommendation that his old employer's firm, Sampson Low, brought out the books, priced 25/-.

## Introduction to the Catalogue

Crestadoro's introduction to the printed catalogue was also approved at this meeting. Given the strong personalities of Harry Rawson and Thomas Baker on the Committee and their direct interest in the Catalogue, it is a tribute to Crestadoro that he was allowed to write this. The title of the introduction,'The Compiler to the Reader', is revealing. Crestadoro's priority was to address the reader directly, to explain simply how the catalogue is formed and best used.

Crestadoro's diplomacy is again evident in this introduction. After two pages of explanation on the structure of the catalogue there is a page of tributes, not effusive but clearly and sincerely expressed. He takes care to give credit to the Committee for their objective in producing a printed guide and their support: 'they have provided every facility which was necessary to secure its attainment'. He gives special thanks to James Crossley and this seems heartfelt. He refers to Crossley's: 'great kindness in revising the printed proofs of the Principal Entries, the groundwork of the Catalogue' and adds 'the Compiler rejoices to have this opportunity of publicly testifying his gratitude for the favour itself, and for the kind and courteous manner in which it was bestowed.' The 'enlightened liberality' of the founders, the corporation which has maintained and 'considerably increased' the collections are all praised.

In his explanation of the structure of the catalogue, Crestadoro makes the point that his system was adopted from the *British Catalogue* index, and underlines its popularity with the BM readers. Perhaps there is an understandable swipe here at Panizzi who had not taken up Crestadoro's proposal of a subject index.

Yet Crestadoro did not mention that he was instrumental in the success of the *British Catalogue* or refer to any of his expert background in the introduction. His modesty must have been welcome to the Committee who had found Edwards' arrogance unsupportable.

He struck the right note for Mancunians of their library being world class: 'the Library, thus laid open before them, may well, for practical utility and adaptation to its purpose, and for just distribution among all the departments of Science and the Arts, challenge comparison with any of its size in the world.'

## The Finished Product

Crestadoro should be remembered in library history for the rare accomplishment of delivering his catalogue well before the deadline and to the agreed cost. Keeping exactly to his promise, he wrote as follows to the Chair of the Manchester Free Library Committee on the 26 April 1864:

> I beg leave to report the receipt of proofs to the end of the catalogue. The whole complete contains about 57,000 references to Authors and Subjects and forms a volume of 975 pages exclusive of the Title and Preface.

> Having now returned to the Printers all the proofs corrected my task is at an end and I shall feel obliged by your laying before the Committee my respectful application for the balance due to me under the contract[373]

In May 1864, the Reference Library Cataloguing Sub Committee presented James Crossley with a copy of the catalogue with their deep thanks for his: 'valuable advice and assistance'. Copies were also presented to the libraries of Salford, Liverpool, the Smithsonian, and in Manchester to Chetham's, the Mechanics' Institution, the Athenaeum and the Mayor's Library, as well as the Mayor himself. Even Dr. Beard was rewarded with a copy: 'for his kind service on a former occasion in relation to the Catalogue.'

Crossley sent in a long letter of exuberant thanks which was copied into the Minutes for 29 July 1864, and Crestadoro must have treasured the words from this prince of Manchester, especially as Crossley had initially recommended Edwards for the contract: 'I have had great pleasure in co-operating during its progress with so intelligent, persevering and systematic a labourer as Professor Crestadoro.'

The scale of what Crestadoro achieved is amazing; he must have worked day and night to describe the 30,000 or so works in the reference collection. He had required no paid assistance.

The catalogue was his own work and responsibility apart from Crossley's invaluable advice and proof reading. Crestadoro regarded himself as the author, as is apparent in a letter he sent to the Chair, John King, on 1 June 1864:

> As it is customary for Authors to look for and to obtain some copies if the Works which bear their names, I beg most respectfully to solicit the favour of your laying before the Committee for their consideration my claim in this respect, as the compiler of the catalogue of the Reference Library[374]

His request was referred to the Library Committee and six copies finally granted though probably not from the calf bound category.

## Publicity and Triumph

The painful history of the Reference Library Catalogue meant that once Crestadoro was appointed there was immense interest in the progress of his work. A failure would have been devastating for the Free Library Committee. Publicity was carefully managed; for example, J. Taylor Kay wrote on behalf of the Committee to the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* on 7 January 1864, to ensure the progress was correctly reported:

> In your report of the City Council Meeting yesterday, Mr Councillor King is reported to have said that 'the first sheets of the Catalogue of the Reference Library had passed through the press'; it should have been, I understand, what is undoubtedly the fact, the <u>last</u> sheets.
>
> As the subject of a Catalogue of the Reference Department of our Library has been now for many years a matter of much importance and of great interest to the general public, you will I doubt not, kindly make the above correction.[375]

The Reference Library Catalogue was received with acclaim and satisfaction. There was surprisingly little criticism, given how eager people had been to put forward their own cataloguing ideas. The *Manchester Guardian* published a substantial review on 28 May 1864. The *Manchester Guardian*, founded by radicals and Unitarians, had from its first issue on 5 May 1821, become an

authority in the city. Their favourable verdict must have been very welcome to the Committee and to Crestadoro:

> Of the 26,534 volumes forming the reference department in the Free Library at Campfield the catalogue has just been published in a handsome royal octavo volume, of nearly a thousand pages. It has been compiled by Signor A. Crestadoro, Ph. D. of the University of Turin, who has been engaged upon it for a year and a half. Anyone who remembers the intricate plan upon which the old MS. catalogue was framed will esteem the simple method pursued in this publication.

This is praise indeed from an obviously knowledgeable commentator, but the reviewer continues by taking delight in pointing out errors. Although the reviewer emphasizes that he has found these errors in: 'less than a dozen pages' the examples are very minor and come across as scraping the barrel to prove his point: 'of the inability of a man thoroughly to apply a good system to an assigned work.'

It was important to answer this key review and this Crestadoro did promptly and courteously, responding to the examples of errors by explaining his rules whilst accepting some mistakes had been made. His tone is perfect, assertive but not aggressive. It is likely that Crestadoro ran the draft past Committee members before it was submitted. The letter appeared on 31 May: 'Your able article on the above subject contains a few inaccuracies which perhaps you will allow me to explain for the advantage of readers'.

Crestadoro had miraculously cut the whole Gordian knot of the Reference Library catalogue. As Munford records: 'in the astonishingly short space of two years (1862-64) [he] produced a completely new catalogue - an author catalogue with author and subject index.'[376]

## Edward Edwards' Verdict

Edwards, supporter of the classified approach, was harsh in his criticism of the type of catalogue Crestadoro had produced. Crestadoro never let this affect him in his subsequent kindness towards Edwards. Edwards did at least acknowledge the care and effort evident in Crestadoro's catalogue:

> The catalogue itself, however – at least on a first impression – was 'on a confused and clumsy plan and the execution little better… than the plan'. On later reflection, its 'careful and laborious execution' made it superior (in comparative utility to students) to some catalogues that are described as 'classified' and that despite 'its clumsy plan' which was 'not classed in any sense and 'not really alphabetical'.[377]

As the fame of the Reference Library Catalogue spread, the contents of the collection became known to scholars. There was surprised appreciation of the revealed treasures of the Free Library and comments like these must have gratified the Committee on two counts: 'The catalogue is, in its way, a work of art, and reflects credit on all who have been concerned in its compilation. A glance over its pages shews us that the library is very valuable, and contains, besides a vast number of useful books, many which are scarce and curious.'[378]

Crestadoro brought to the Manchester catalogue a rare fusion of skills and experience. How many bibliophiles and scholars were also familiar with engineering workshops, with the practical information needs of inventors? His approach of finding simple solutions to complex problems enabled him to make major breakthroughs in information science.

## ‘Continuous Labour’

Unlike Panizzi, whose promotion to Principal Librarian in 1856, enabled him to escape the burden of the BM catalogue, Crestadoro as Chief Librarian remained actively involved in the production of catalogues for Campfield Lending Library, the branches and as supplements for the Reference Library catalogue.

These printed catalogues, like the annual reports, were sent to libraries around the world. Cataloguing was generally viewed as part of a Chief Librarian’s duties in the Free Libraries, and some committees, unlike Manchester, had little understanding of the task.

Even to this day, top levels of management do not usually appreciate the time, effort and skills needed to catalogue collections properly. Manchester Free Libraries Committee had wisely learnt from their experts, Edwards, Crestadoro and their advisor James Crossley. Under the leadership of the chair, Thomas Baker, a man always passionate about libraries, they took pains to point this out, as in the 1873 Annual Report:

> The amount of time and labour spent by the Chief Librarian and his assistants in preparation of Catalogues is not generally known. Work of this kind is always in hand. The compilation of Catalogues for the six lending libraries involves continuous labour as will be readily understood when it is remembered that each library contains on average 13,000 volumes and a new catalogue is required for each branch about every four years

The Cataloguing Sub Committee disbanded after the delivery of the Reference Library Catalogue, but the Committee did not abandon their interest in the catalogues. They were of major importance to the reputation and to the effective running of the of the library service. The printed catalogues on sale at each branch also represented a source of revenue. In 1872, for example, the Ancoats Index-Catalogue cost eight pence and the Chorlton and Ardwick Index-Catalogue nine pence, which equates to approximately £14.00 in modern money. The Minutes, which are so revealing of all the stages in the evolution of the Reference Library Catalogue continue to give information on the more routine delivery of new catalogues, supplements and revisions.

Although always interested in catalogues, Crestadoro did find the relentless creation and updating of catalogues a considerable addition to all his other duties. He never refused the burden but did expect acknowledgement of his hard work, as he pointed out on one occasion when his request for a salary increase was declined. His best staff became involved as assistants, but under his supervision.

## Quality

As well as the intellectual work of producing the records, Crestadoro had to organise the the task through the stages of printing, binding, distribution and selling. The impressive Reference Library Catalogue had made Crestadoro’s reputation, and shoddy work was unacceptable to him. His anger is apparent in this letter of 30 March 1870:

> Mr Crestadoro wishes to direct the attention of the Committee to certain defects in the printing of this Catalogue which prevent him from regarding with unmixed satisfaction the termination of his labours upon it....
>
> The folding and stitching shows the same want of neatness and finish and is very irregularly and carelessly done… The Manchester Free Library is so generally regarded as a model for the imitation of similar institutions that Mr Crestadoro cannot help regretting

> that the Catalogue should be so defective from a typographical point of view instead of reaching that high standard of excellence which it is desirable the institution should maintain.

Fast as Crestadoro worked (he had averaged 150 to 200 titles per hour for the Reference Library Catalogue, which is a stupendous rate), he went to great lengths to ensure accuracy and there were few errors for would be critics to pick up. An example of his method is in his letter to a publisher, Thos. Scott Esq. of 13 June 1877. This shows he even made the effort of checking back with publishers, perhaps something he learnt from Sampson Low: 'I enclose proof of the catalogue entry of our set of your series of publications and shall be very glad to receive any observations or corrections which you may kindly favour me with. Be good enough to return the proof as soon as possible'.

## Campfield Impact

The Campfield building had presented problems from the start. Eventually, stock had to be moved to lighten the load on the cracking walls and, on 24 February 1875, Crestadoro sent a memorandum to the Committee detailing both the disappointment readers suffered as a consequence of this farming out and the delays to the supplement for the Reference Library Catalogue: 'Mr Crestadoro begs to say also that the progress of the printing of the Reference Library Catalogue is greatly hindered by the books not being at hand the 'proofs' having to be kept back until the books are sent for.' The abandonment of Campfield in March 1877 impacted on all aspects of Crestadoro's working life, including his catalogues, and the stress cannot have helped his health.

## Crestadoro's Disobedience

In all his years of service Crestadoro only suffered two reprimands from Thomas Baker and both were in relation to cataloguing. The Minutes of 25 July 1877 record the following:

> The first part of the catalogue is already printed but the entries of the books have already been made without any alphabetical order whatsoever. For this departure from the method adopted in the former catalogue Mr Crestadoro alone is responsible. The cashier having become acquainted with the change accidentally and not until the sheets had been printed off. It may be admitted that an alphabetical arrangement of the first part imposes much labour and is comparatively useless when accompanied by an Index catalogue but such a change ought not to have been made without the sanction of the board.

Crestadoro believed that an alphabetical order for the principal entries was redundant when the index provided the key. By dropping this he gained the advantage of being able to update and incorporate earlier and latter entries. It was bold of him to do this without full discussion by the Committee and unusual to take such a risk. Later on, this lack of alphabetical arrangement in the supplementary catalogue before the index was available caused difficulties, as was reported in *The Manchester Guardian* article on 8 May 1879, a month after Crestadoro's death:

> The portion of the supplementary catalogue already printed extends over a thousand pages, but the most important part of the work remains to be done. In the system devised by Dr. Crestadoro the titles are printed in the form of an inventory, and are destitute alike of alphabetical arrangement or classification. Hence the only key to their use is the index upon which Mr. Sutton is, we understand, now at work. This index will contain not less than 120,000 entries referring to the authors and subjects dealt with by the books in the library. Its revision, a task alike arduous and important, is being rapidly proceeded with.

Sutton was now Chief Librarian, but like Crestadoro before him he was expected to work directly on the catalogues despite all his other pressing duties.

Crestadoro earned his second reprimand a few months later when, as recorded in his report of 27 March 1878, he asked for retrospective approval for some staff changes. It would seem he took this unprecedented step purely to get Miss Beswick into cataloguing: Crestadoro, as we shall see later, had high regard for the intelligence of females. But to employ additional assistants without authorisation was well beyond his remit. Again he took an unusual risk for something that was so critical to him, his catalogues:

> Mr Crestadoro begs further to report that in order to accelerate the preparation of the index for printing it is necessary to call in the assistance of some intelligent Female. As the most suitable appears to be Miss Beswick she has been subject to your approval transferred from Chorlton & Ardwick Branch and assigned the duty of assisting in the arrangement of the index slips. Mr Crestadoro begs to ask for the authority to retain her services permanently.

The Minutes of the 17 April 1878 meeting show that Crestadoro received a reprimand and another control was put in place on his activities:

> The Cttee informed Mr Crestadoro that he had exceeded his duty in engaging new assistants and they insisted upon the appointment of any new assistants being brought in due course before the Cttee. The Cttee decline to make any increase on the number of assistants as the present staff at the Reference Library appeared to them to be in excess of the work to be done as compared with that that existed at Campfield (Lending). They decided with not interfering with it at present. Resolved I that Mr Crestadoro be instructed to report every three months to the chairman with regard to assistants in the Ref Library and any changes that may from time to time be required.

(There is one more instance where Crestadoro deliberately went ahead with actions in contravention of the Committee's directive but in that case without any repercussions.)

## Compromises and Innovations

Crestadoro had compromised on two aspects of the Reference Library Catalogue under the Committee's direction, accepting the use of a running number as the link rather than a keyword and the dropping of a keyword to display after author.

Crestadoro himself recognized that the catalogues for the six lending branches needed be simpler and at an affordable price.

The Reference Catalogue consisted of two parts, the Principal Entries and then the Index. The branch catalogues consist only of one simple sequence, an index for subjects, authors and Crestadoro's 'appellant' titles. The detail given in the description is minimal, date of publication and number of volumes, but Crestadoro did not stint on contents information or explanatory notes. A list of current newspapers and periodicals held at the branch was included as well as two pages of library rules under the fairly friendly heading of 'Directions to the Readers and Borrowers'.

The other Free Libraries which followed the model compromised on some points. Henry Allpass made some typical modifications in the New Cardiff Free Library Catalogue, as described in the *Western Mail*, 20 October 1883:

> Mr. Allpass, who, before his appointment to the chief librarianship of the Cardiff Free

> Library, was an assistant to Dr. Crestadoro, has in the main adopted the system devised by its inventor. But this has been sacrificed in some instances when a simpler arrangement could, without injury to the work, be adopted. Amongst the important alterations the selections from the contents of such periodicals as All The Year Round, Temple Bar, &c, have been omitted as being at the best a very untrustworthy guide to the actual contents of the works. Whilst making this alteration, however, the plan of giving short descriptive notices of many of the books, the titles of which were not sufficiently explicit, has been adhered to.

## Following Crestadoro's Plan

Like Edwards and to a lesser extent, Smiles, Crestadoro was a recipient of many queries on all sorts of Free Library or scholarly topics. Edwards had found this burdensome, but Crestadoro seems to have been endlessly patient. He was often consulted on the form of catalogues and methods of producing them and in response provided much detailed advice, sometimes accompanied by a copy of the latest annual report and a printed catalogue. Though the Out Letter books are limited, the few Crestadoro responses that survive are practical, tending to common sense and guidelines rather than being prescriptive.

John Mullins, Chief Librarian of Birmingham from 1865 to 1898, was an outstanding librarian: he and Crestadoro were of equal significance in the development of the Free Libraries. He respected Crestadoro's system. There is a letter from his assistant, J. M. Christie asking Crestadoro for a copy of the much admired Manchester Catalogue.[379]

The Cardiff Chief Librarian (Mr Allpass's predecessor) contacted him on 26 June 1869 asking for his advice:

> The system now in use is framed on that of the Free Library Liverpool but does not give satisfaction borrowers being unable from the complex nature of the classification to find the book they require. Do you think the Subject Matter Entry – as shown in your Manchester Catalog 1864, without the principal entry would answer our purpose..?

Cardiff did indeed turn from the Liverpool model to Crestadoro's (which must have been very satisfying to the Manchester Free Library Committee) and the article from the *Western Mail*, 2 October 1883, quoted above, describes the success of the catalogue. There is a neat description of the principles and a view of why it works for most readers:

> The question of the best form of catalogue for a Free Town Library is one on which it is very probable that the opinions of even competently informed persons will continue to differ, but it is generally conceded by librarians that the 'index system' invented by Dr. Crestadoro, late chief librarian of the Manchester Free Libraries, has been received with the most favour by the general body of borrowers, owing to its simplicity and completeness.

John Pink, of Cambridge Free Libraries, was another prominent librarian who regularly corresponded with Crestadoro. He too decided to take Crestadoro's advice for the catalogue: 'followed your plan in preparing it as you so kindly described in your letter'.[380] (Pink was exceptional in allowing open access for his readers.)

Crestadoro's correspondence reveals that Free Libraries right across Britain either adopted his model or considered it: amongst them, Belfast, Dundee, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Preston, Saltaire and Tynemouth.

He was generous in allowing his system to be freely followed. The Newport Free Library librarian wrote to him on 10 April 1874 requesting his sanction to use Crestadoro's principle as implemented in the Manchester catalogue. He comments that his Committee 'unanimously approved' of the principle which he himself finds: 'so thoroughly good and sound that it forms a most ready and easy mode for Borrowers to discover their wants, and therefore I am anxious to be able to give my Borrowers the benefit of it'.

There is a draft reply scribbled on the back of the letter in Crestadoro's hand writing:

> April 13
>
> Your request is similar to many I have received on the subject. I am pleased to hear your approval of the system of our Catalogues. You have my sanction to make use of them as may suit you, and I shall be glad if they prove of any service to you.

Thomas B. Potter, Sir John Potter's brother, was himself an eminent politician, known as 'Principles Potter' and a personal friend of Garibaldi. He seems to have been well acquainted with Crestadoro. In May 1872, Potter sent a copy of the Catalogue to the Reform Club and then forwarded their praise to Crestadoro with a note: 'Dear Mr Crestadoro - I think this will please you'.[381] The Reform Club secretary had commented: 'I believe it to be one of the very best catalogues ever compiled.'

There is valuable material surviving in the Out Letters where Crestadoro responds to criticism or queries on his catalogues. One letter in particular could be published as a pamphlet, giving Crestadoro's opinions as well as direct information on his working methods and precise timings. It is fortunate indeed that this letter is still largely legible. It is dated 1 November 1871 and addressed to a John McLaren Esq. One feature to note is the incredible target Crestadoro set as standard: 'On average I should say from 150 to 200 titles per hour of assiduous work might be disposed of.'

Five years later, on 14 March 1876, Crestadoro described the approach for incorporating new accessions into the catalogue. (Eventually the problem of updating printing catalogues or having to produce innumerable supplements was a major factor in their demise). Altogether the Letter Books provide a scatter of information that enables a real understanding of how the catalogues were produced and maintained.

Axon, in reviewing the Lending Libraries of Manchester noted that: 'There have been catalogues published of each of these collections, arranged on the "Index plan" introduced into England by Dr. Crestadoro, and which from its elasticity and usefulness is fast superseding other forms of cataloguing for popular use.'[382]

In their time and context the printed index catalogues had been brilliant innovations and succeeded, as was Crestadoro's stated purpose in his introduction to the Reference Library Catalogue, in opening up the content of the collections to the readers of the Free Libraries. Crestadoro was quite right with his noted dictum that: 'a library without a print catalogue is but buried treasure'.[383]

## Defence of the Catalogues

Manchester was proud and fond of its Chief Librarian. There are several instances where correspondents spring up to defend him in the local press. For example, when the anonymous 'A Borrower' criticized him for delays to a catalogue for the Ancoats Branch, another anonymous correspondent 'A Lover of Justice' responded in the 8 March 1872 issue of *The Manchester Guardian*, demolishing the idea that the branch librarian should produce the catalogue instead:

> I have no doubt whatever as to the competency of the 'obliging manager' to compile the catalogue so much 'needed', but I think that it was out of order for 'A Borrower' to insinuate that the librarian could produce the catalogue in a shorter period than his chief; for who could be more suitable to perform the duty than such a learned gentleman as Dr. Crestadoro, who has devoted so much of his time to these subjects?

It is tempting to think the Ancoats librarian encouraged someone to write the first letter and that Crestadoro encouraged someone else to pen the response. There were jealousies and resentments amongst some of the staff as we shall see later.

Crestadoro regularly published letters to explain or defend library matters, including delays to the catalogues. A certain 'Patience' was difficult to soothe in his annoyance at the delays between printing and bookbinding of the supplementary catalogue for the Reference Library. Crestadoro's final response was published in *The Manchester Guardian* on 18 July 1872:

> Sir,—As your correspondent 'Patience' mentions again my name, perhaps you will permit me to complete the information which I can offer on the subject of his letter.
>
> Not only is there a complete list at the service of the readers, as I stated in my reply to his first letter, but a catalogue is also written in the form in which it is to be printed, up to the very last accessions, and the printing this catalogue has actually proceeded as far as page 153. If to this you add the preparation and printing of several lending libraries catalogues, published and in press, you will see that we have not been inactive neither before nor since 'the sederunt of the Council' to which your correspondent refers. I confine myself to the simple statement of facts, and am sorry that your correspondent should think my previous letter 'a mockery,' as nothing was further from my thoughts.—I am, &c.
>
> Campfield, July 17, 1872 A.CRESTADORO

As Chief Librarian, Crestadoro produced catalogues, trained assistants, dealt with printers, bookbinders and distributors, reported to the Committees, answered criticisms in the press, responded to requests for advice from all over Britain, and this was only one aspect of his many duties.

Axon commented in Crestadoro's obituary on the immense labour Crestadoro put into the effort of producing a second volume of the Reference Library Catalogue but that: 'Latterly he appeared to have a foreboding, which has, unfortunately, been realized, that he would not be able to complete this task.' Axon had no doubt that: 'The catalogue of the Reference Library will ever be a monument of his industry, and in spite of all defects, is one of the most useful ever made.'

## The Sheaf Catalogue

Crestadoro's bent for improvement and tinkering were not subdued by his role as Chief Librarian. He produced the sliding hinge device for doors, and a new mechanism for displaying catalogue records. (Crestadoro's compatriot Panizzi managed the invention of a peg for shelf support, apparently known as the Panizzi Pin.)[384]

Whilst the Free Library world was following Crestadoro's rules and principles for compiling catalogues and printing the entries in books, it looks as if the man himself was intent on another design for displaying the entries, the sheaf catalogue.

There are two sources for this information. The first is from James Duff Brown who entertained the LA meeting in November 1893 with a look at '*Mechanical Methods of Displaying Catalogues and*

*Indexes*'[385]. This article still stands as the best and most detailed historical survey of the subject, valuable especially for its focus on how readers manage with the various devices.

Duff Brown identified five categories of devices for displaying catalogues, the Page system in printed or manuscript books, Cards, Sheaf, Placard, and 'for want of a better name' the Panoramic system. He found determining the origins of these devices difficult. In the case of the card index he concluded that despite the various claims it has been in use 'since the days of Dick Whittington'. He explained how the Sheaf system worked and added:

> The idea is by no means novel. Where it actually originated I cannot say, but I know that a primitive example of the system was used by Dr. Crestadoro, of Manchester, thirty years ago, and that Mr. Sutton showed a sample of it at Nottingham in 1891. This consisted of an iron bar, on which were two bolts slightly apart, having a small nut on each. The slips were punched to fit on to the bolts, and the bundle was clamped by the nuts. It was an invention only adapted for private use.

The sheaf catalogue he was shown was presumably the one that survives in the Manchester Library Archives as item M740/550.

I have handled this – the first page is torn with just this fragment remaining: 'MS CA LIBRARIAN OF THE MANCH'. The slips are in varied writing. Many of the entries are for manuscripts, antiquarian or unpublished works, others for local publications. Beautiful notes are added in what looks like Crestadoro's writing. This volume starts at A and finishes at Dallaway J. The latest publication date I found was 1866. Finally, a half slip or memo note, partially illegible, fell out of the Sheaf catalogue: 'MS Catalogue …the late Mr Cre…of the Manchester..about 1868'.

This must have been Crestadoro's invention for private use, compiling some of his entries for the Reference Library Catalogue in a new way. Did he intend to develop this? Are there more lost volumes?

Sutton took the idea forward as a means of updating the catalogue, for N.K. Firby refers to this in her review of the Reference Library catalogues: 'This index was supplemented by a sheaf catalogue of later additions which was in use until about 1922 when it was superseded by the present card catalogue.'[386] She does not credit Crestadoro by name but he is linked to all these catalogues. He was working on the index that Sutton completed after his death, and it now appears that he invented the sheaf catalogue or at least brought it into use in Manchester.

The clearest statement is from L. Stanley Jast in 1902 when he was Chief Librarian at Croydon. He became the fifth Chief Librarian of Manchester in 1920. According to Jast's account Crestadoro's invention indeed became a model:

> Though I have spoken of the sheaf catalogue as 'new,' it is not, of course, new at all. When I was at Manchester, attending the L.A. Annual Meeting, Mr. Credland fished out for me from somewhere a sheaf catalogue made for Dr. Crestadoro as a sample, which was in essentials exactly the same as the modern sheaf, but superior in that it opened better. This was due to its greater length, and it was acting on this hint that Mr. Lambert introduced a longed form of his sheaf. Experiment has shown that a minimum length of about seven and three quarters| to eight in. (of slips, not of the binding) gives the best results. If shorter than this, the leaves will neither open freely nor remain open at the place desired. This detail is worth noting, as I believe that a shorter form is still on the market.[387]

## Manchester Catalogues post Crestadoro

Crestadoro's catalogue was still being followed at the turn of the century but changes were on their way. *The Manchester Guardian* in a long review of 'Books and Bookmen' published 29 August 1896, includes a mention of the ongoing popularity of Crestadoro's catalogue:

> Heywood has a free library containing about 12,000 volumes, and a very creditable catalogue has been complied by Mr. J.A. Green, of Heywood. It follows, but with various modifications, the dictionary plan made popular in this country by the catalogues prepared under the direction of the late Dr. Crestadoro for the branches of the Manchester Free Library.

John Albert Green, who became the librarian at the Moss Side Branch in Manchester, Library, produced several specialist catalogues on items in the Manchester collections as well as the general one for Heywood. He even went further than Crestadoro in indexing the subjects of essays and contents of collected works, an improvement that Crestadoro would certainly have welcomed.

All things pass and it was inevitable general printed catalogues would be replaced by new approaches and technologies, by card catalogues and then by online. Crestadoro's printed index catalogue, the model for so many Free Libraries, was supplanted by classified card catalogues, using DDC, which became the standard across all UK public libraries.

It was towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the early part of the twentieth century that public libraries gradually changed from closed to open access shelving, allowing readers to browse the books directly. The need for books to be properly arranged in subject order was a main reason for the spread of DDC, which was generally preferred to other classification schemes.

It is satisfying that Manchester was the first to use DDC in the UK in 1877, only a year after the scheme was published. Axon is credited with the first private use of DDC, classifying his library of 5,000 books in 'little more than a week' whilst Sutton pioneered DDC in re-cataloguing the Reference Library: 'This must surely be the earliest example of DDC in the UK, predating standard estimates by five years.'[388]

Sutton died in 1920 after fifty-five years of service and was succeeded in turn by his deputy, another outstanding librarian, L. Stanley Jast. Jast reorganized Manchester Libraries in the aftermath of the war years and the famous Central Library was opened in 1934, three years after he retired. Its new card catalogue had been in preparation for many years.

*The Manchester Guardian* ran a feature on 9 December 1927 on: 'Preparing a Card Catalogue. Manchester Library's Big Task.' Like Crestadoro before him, Jast was solving what had become an untenable situation for readers who had to wade through three cumbersome registers to find what they needed. These were Crestadoro's three volumes covering 1852-1879, the manuscript catalogue that followed with very sparse entries and then the card index that covered 1918 accessions onwards. The collection had grown in Sutton's time from 50,000 volumes to 200,000 volumes. The end was at last in sight:

> When the manuscript catalogue has been disposed of there will still remain the early printed catalogues of Dr. Crestadoro. These, however, will not present any great difficulty, and as soon as their contents have been transferred to the card catalogue the new index will be complete.

So Crestadoro's principal entries still survive within a modern catalogue.

## Backlash and Balance

All this is natural progress, but what is unpalatable is the venom with which Crestadoro's index catalogue model was attacked. New young librarians challenged the dogmas of the past and Crestadoro was seen as representative of narrow and mechanistic approaches.

The most vocal against him was James Duff Brown (1862-1914), the radical pioneer of modern librarianship. Much is due to him: open access to the collections in public libraries, instigating a new approach of library architecture and functional planning, improved design for library appliances and catalogues, library bulletins, and indirectly through his advocacy of classification (his own failed scheme) the widespread use of DDC. He was a brave man who battled for his principles, suffering the hostility of he manufacturers of the indicators used for closed access systems. His bitter conflicts over the registration of librarians led to his resignation from the LA, who nevertheless honoured him with a Fellowship.

There was a scathing passage by Duff Brown on Crestadoro in the 1897 yearbook, edited by Thomas Greenwood:

> The dictum of the late Mr. Crestadoro of Manchester, that the title-page of a book is the only description which any one has a right to regard, has probably done more than anything else to reduce the whole art of cataloguing to a mere mechanical operation, and has called into existence more bald, colourless, unreliable and imperfect inventories of books than even the aforesaid codes of rules. Because of Crestadoro's opinion and the number of catalogues issued in imitation of his example, most of the Public Library catalogues are nothing more or less than bare lists of titles utterly devoid of notes, marks or suggestions of any kind to serve as guides to the borrower who has to make his choice of literature through this medium. It is considered quite enough if all the books by a given author are brought together in these inventories, and if, further, they are placed under such subject-words as occur on the title-pages. The stand point adopted is that of assuming considerable book-knowledge on the part of the reader, and providing him with a list of the titles of books in the Library, leaving him to ascertain for himself the question of their suitability, antiquity, period and scope.[389]

It is ironic that Duff Brown blamed Crestadoro for the lack of notes in other people's catalogues. As we have seen, Crestadoro initiated the use of notes and they were included not just in the Reference Library catalogue but in the branch library catalogues too.

More seriously, most commentators have followed Duff Brown's misunderstanding that Crestadoro was rigid about the title as the only source for subjects, and this more than anything that has damaged his reputation. For example, K.G.B. Bakewell, a leading expert in the late twentieth century repeats the same line: 'Crestadoro suggested that subject headings must be taken from titles.'[390]

Charles Cutter, in a review of library catalogues written in 1876 for the United States Bureau of Science, looked in detail at Crestadoro's '*The Art of Making Catalogues*', at his work with Sampson Low and the whole business of whether Crestadoro restricted the cataloguer to the title keywords to cover the subjects of the book. Cutter acknowledged that Crestadoro wrote in his pamphlet that where the title was inadequate: 'he would have the cataloguer supply in that title the author's name, the subject, and the 'nature' of the book (sermon, thesis, oratorio,) if the author had failed to do so himself in his title'.

However, Cutter found that the additions to titles, the full cross references and lists of subheadings

were never produced in practice: ‘in any catalogue published by him or similar to his in England.’ Cutter concludes: ‘I called the plan admirable; it had, however, one defect- its close adherence to title.’

In this respect, Cutter’s assessment is unfair to Crestadoro. It is certainly rare that subjects are added in his catalogues to supplement the titles, but it was never forbidden to do so when necessary.

In fact, Crestadoro was always ready to add words in where the title was not adequate and he was never rigid about rules. His staff often referred to his saying: ‘What are rules for but to be broken?’ Axon assisted Crestadoro with the catalogues that followed the 1864 Reference Library Catalogue, including the supplementary volume. Axon wrote a paper, which he entitled as homage ‘*The Art of Cataloguing*’. In this, Axon described Crestadoro’s working practice, which he knew intimately, and was definite that the policy was to add subject words and indeed omit them where necessary: ‘These lacunae so far as possible the cataloguer supplies to the principal entry, and his additions become equally material for the index-entries as the author’s own words.’[391]

Axon also described with relish of the other side of the coin that is always overlooked in considerations of Crestadoro: the policy of trimming down titles that are intolerably ‘longwinded’ with ‘superfluous matter’ that needs to be removed.

Duff Brown did not look directly at Crestadoro’s ideas and probably followed Cutter in his conviction that Crestadoro’s rule was to limit subjects to those written in the title. He again unfairly blamed Crestadoro for the faults of others in a passage he wrote in 1898. Crestadoro, contrary to how Duff Brown perceived him, was always intent on providing subject access for readers, the very opposite of Duff Brown’s assessment here:

> About 1857 a new order of catalogue began to become common, which has remained till now the standard pattern in most British public libraries. This was the so-called Dictionary catalogue, arranged in a single alphabet of authors, titles, and such subject words as occurred on the title-pages. The once widely circulated and strongly believed dictum that no cataloguer had a right to go beyond the title-page of a book for particulars of its subject or scope was originally laid down by Dr. Crestadoro, of Manchester, and adopted in many quarters, plenty of catalogues remain to prove. Of course the main idea in propounding such a doctrine was based on the De Morgan-Jevons formulae that readers knew either the authors or titles of the books they wanted and did not particularly require to know about subject matter. Most modern librarians have abandoned this position,[392]

How amazed Duff Brown would have been to find old Dr. Crestadoro rediscovered by American computer scientists, notably Hans Luhn, in the 1950s and the power of his permutated keyword index transformed into new contexts. The theories in *The Art of Making Catalogues* and the experimental structure of his index catalogues means that Crestadoro’s name is sometime listed with the great names over whose contributions there is no dispute. Some information scientists in India hold him in particular regard. For example G. Bhattacharya writes: ‘Research in cataloguing may be said to have begun in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Prior to 1928, the chief contributors were Baber, Panizzi, Jewett, Crestadoro, Dziatzko, Cutter, Linderfelt, and Kaiser.’[393]

Charles Cutter himself , though unfair over the title keywords issue, referred to Crestadoro in three instances in his famous *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*[394] and obviously respected his opinion even if he disagreed with a point. Cutter had doubts over books being entered: ‘under the name of editor or translator when the author’s name is not given, as proposed by Mr. Crestadoro’. He

mentioned in a footnote; 'single examples may be brought up in which it seems as if the classification expressed the form (Crestadoro's "nature") or something which a friend calls the "essence" of the book and not its subject'. Of particular interest is his note that: 'Mr. Crestadoro is the only person who has thought that plays etc., deserve two title-entries, one from the first word, the other from what we might call the form-word.'

Some of the great scholars of information science, amongst them Robert M. Hayes, John Metcalf, Elaine Svenoius, and Francis Miska, give a balanced view of what Crestadoro actually achieved. I have had some correspondence with Robert M. Hayes, professor at UCLA, who now includes Crestadoro on his course:

> The theme of cataloging has been of such importance in the history of IT in libraries, that I want to identify two persons of historic relevance, though not to IT as such: Antonio Panizzi and Andrea Crestadoro. I do so because they represent the two purposes of the catalog: (1) management of the library's collection and (2) search of, access to, and use of the library's collection.
>
> Panizzi in 1841, as Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum, developed his "Ninety-One Cataloguing Rules" to support management of the collection. Those rules have been the basis of subsequent cataloging theory. Crestadoro in 1856 proposed , in contrast, that the catalog should support the needs of users and, in effect, that words in titles would be effective in doing so.[395]

## Manchester Appreciation

Manchester, for a time fondly remembered their unusual third Chief Librarian, his inventions and indexes. The publicity over the new card catalogue in the late 1920s and then the opening of the new Central Library in 1934 sparked recollections in the newspapers.

There are five scraps in the Manchester Archive File[396] MCN 13 A 29, photocopied from newspapers, with fond memories of Crestadoro's catalogues. Here are two of those comments:

> He produced a remarkable catalogue, in which every entry was printed, and contained the number of pages, place and date of issue of each book. I asked one of the attendants a few years ago, and he showed me a copy of the catalogue which I had admired some years before. E.S.
>
> I once bought from a stall in Manchester the two first volumes and catalogues and they were a feast, as against the skeleton entries now compulsory because of the immense collection. R.L.

The eminent bibliographer, Henry B. Wheatley published his influential *How to Catalogue a Library* in 1889 and *How to Make an Index* in 1902. In both books he was critical of Crestadoro and his index-catalogue. *The Manchester Guardian* reviews gave Wheatley well deserved praise, he latter became known as the 'father of indexers', but both reviews defended the city's old Chief Librarian and his catalogues:

> Mr. Wheatley, we think, does not do full justice to Dr. Crestadoro's system, of which the main point was the application to printed books of methods always adopted for calendaring and indexing manuscripts. (The *Manchester Guardian*, 12 November 1889)

> His criticism (p.125) of Dr. Crestadoro's plan of index-catalogues, opens matters of controversy, but the example he cites appears to be based upon a misapprehension.
>
> (The *Manchester Guardian*, 24 June 1902)

In 1963 N.K. Firby wrote the first major piece on Crestadoro since Axon's obituary, and this appeared both in *The Manchester Review* and the *Encyclopedia of Library & Information Science*.[397] She brought in a unique perspective as Deputy Chief Cataloguer at Manchester.

## Final Comment

Crestadoro must have been pleased with the acclaim that his catalogue brought him and the extent to which the new Free Libraries followed it as a model. Praise came from other quarters as well. James Stanley Jevons, the eminent Professor of Political Economy at UCL London, wrote the following of Crestadoro in his influential work, published in 1874, *Principles of Science*:

> It is often desirable, however, that a name catalogue should be accompanied by a subordinate subject catalogue, but in this case no attempt should be made to devise a theoretically complete classification. Every principal subject treated in a book should be entered separately in an alphabetical list, under the name most likely to occur to the searcher, or under several names. This method was partially carried out in Watts' Bibliotheca Britannica, but it was excellently applied in the admirable subject index to the British Catalogue of Books, and equally well in the Catalogue of the Manchester Free Library at Campfield, drawn up under the direction of Mr. Crestadoro, this latter being the most perfect model of a printed catalogue with which I am acquainted.[398]

(This reference to Crestadoro was removed in later editions when he was no longer a significant figure.)

Jevons repeated his praise in the testimonial he gave W.E.A. Axon in 1879 that: 'the Catalogue of the Manchester Free Library at Campfield, drawn up under the direction of Mr. Crestadoro, this latter being the most perfect model of a printed catalogue with which I am acquainted.' He also emphasized how fortunate Axon was, to be: 'trained to library management by so accomplished a Librarian and Catalogue Compiler.'[399]

Even Thomas Baker, who did not easily give credit, acknowledged how much they owed Crestadoro who had succeeded where everyone else had failed. When he presented his report to the Council on 6 September 1871, as described the next day in the *Manchester Guardian,* he included this compliment to Crestadoro, crediting the fame of the catalogue for the generous donations now coming from the United States:

> The Council would be of opinion that the American people were by no means niggardly with their gifts to this country. The Manchester Corporation were indebted for the consideration which was shown them to the excellent catalogue of their reference library, which had been prepared by Dr. Crestadoro. It had shown to the world what a valuable institution Manchester possessed.

From Crestadoro's perspective there was little time to rest on the laurels won in 1864, and throughout his life as Chief Librarian he would continue to wrestle with the difficulties of updating the Reference Library catalogue, of producing branch catalogues, keeping printers and bookbinders up to the mark of his high standards and finding the right staff to assist him.

He did not live to see the backlash against index catalogues, and if he had he might well have

welcomed the debates and new ideas. Crestadoro was always ready to produce improvements. Only four years after the Reference Library Catalogue was printed he was devising the sheaf catalogue.

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[370] Munford, *Edward Edwards*, p.158

[371] MA, Minutes of Library Committee, Cataloguing Sub Committee

[372] W.E.A. Axon, *Handbook of the Public Libraries of Manchester and Salford* (Manchester: Heywood, 1877) p.196

[373] MA, In Letter 24/105

[374] MA, In Letter 25/2

[375] MA, In Letter 24/51

[376] Munford, *Edward Edwards*, p. 93

[377] Munford, *Edward Edwards*, p.158

[378] 'Town talk and things in general', *The Sphinx*, 2:43 (5 June 1869) p.84

[379] MA, In Letter 69/35

[380] MA, In Letter 69/70/116

[381] MA, In Letter 39/94

[382] Axon, *Handbook of the Public Libraries*, p.115

[383] MA, Out Letters, 1 November 1871

[384] 'Anthony Panizzi', Wikipedia, citing Ulrich Naumann

[385] J. Duff Brown, 'Mechanical methods of displaying catalogues and indexes', *The Library* (1894)

[386] N.K. Firby, 'The Manchester Reference Library and its Catalogues: some problems of growth', *Manchester Review*, 10 (Spring 1963) pp.19-25,

[387] L. Stanley Jast, 'The sheaf and card catalogues: a comparison', *The Library World*, (July 1902-June 1903) pp.129-131

[388] Lucy Evans, 'Early Days of DDC Networking in the UK', in *New Perspectives on Subject Indexing and Classification Essays in Honour of Magda Heiner-Freiling* (Leipsig: Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, 2008) p. 35

[389] James D. Brown, 'Recent developments of library practice', in Thomas Greenwood (ed.) *Greenwood's Library Year Book 1897 A Record of General Library Progress and Work*, (London: Cassell, 1897) p. 89

[390] K. G. B. Bakewell, *A Manual of Cataloguing Practice* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1972) p.6

[391] Axon, *Handbook of the Public Libraries*, p.192

[392] James D. Brown, *Manual of Library Classification and Shelf Arrangement*, (London: Library Supply, 1898) p.91

[393] G. Bhattacharya, Cataloguing Research in India, *SRELS Journal of Information Management*, (January 2002) p. 307-386

[394] Charles A. Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue* (Washington: USGPO, 1891)

[395] Robert M. Hayes, e-mail to author, 18 May 2008

[396] MA, File MCN 13 A 29

[397] *Encyclopedia of Library & Information Science* (New York: Dekker, 1971)

[398] William Stanley Jevons, *The Principles of Science: a treatise on Logic and Scientific Method* (London: Oxford printed, 1874) p.717

[399] William E. A. Axon, *Chief Librarianship of the Birmingham Free Libraries. Testimonials in favour of William E. A. Axon* (Manchester: Ireland, 1879) p.16

# Chapter Fourteen: Looking for the Light Through the Pouring Rain[400]

> Manchester has taken possession of me for good. I cannot leave. I do not want to leave. I must not. W.G. Sebald[401]

## The Mythic City

Had Crestadoro become Chief Librarian of Birmingham, Leeds or Liverpool or other nodes of Free Library development, he would not have haunted me.

Manchester is my home city, its libraries a vital part of my childhood. Complex layers of names, places, memories, images and stories hook up inside me, not all my own. This confusing mix has been there from my first conscious years, as if there were previous bubbles of Manchester that I had moved in and still continued to recognise. My ancestors walked the same streets as Crestadoro, he knew the mills where they worked, the theatres they frequented and, like them, savoured rare holiday escapes from the polluted air.

Manchester has a strong hold on the imagination, with layer upon layer of history in the formidable stones, bricks and concrete of the centre, in the labyrinth of its alleys and dark waterways. The city that impacted world industry and trade gives emotional pulls that cannot be easily explained, and that stimulate creativity or obsessive seeking of a past that still has a vibrant presence. Generations of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society and the Portico Library members, elegiac novelists such as Howard Spring, poets, film makers, artists, football supporters, strange publishing houses such as Savoy all show the same need to come to terms with the compelling city.

The rise of ‘Madchester’ in the late 1980s world of iconic clubs cannot be separated from the

physical past and present of the city:

> The stubborn, miserable, crumbling brick walls and the bleak city pavements would be turned into sound, the derelict old buildings bisected by the sweeping Ballardian motorways would mutate into rhythm, as if the soot and ash and dust, the sinister accumulated weight of history, the dead grandness and the brutal, neutral new skyscrapers could he cleared away by dreams, and nightmares, and a certain kind of serious, dynamic song.[402]

Crestadoro was one of many who settled in the city and made it their home.

## Crestadoro in the Fogs of Manchester

Alfredo Obertello, like many a visitor before him, was appalled, fascinated and overwhelmed by the dark miasma of Manchester. In 1932, the thick pollution that the Manchester Society for the Promotion of Scientific Industry and many others had struggled to banish still strangled the city and stultified her population.

Smoke contaminated the sheets of heavy rain, freshly cascading from the Atlantic clouds before they rolled away over the Pennines, the Manchester weather that is still part of the city's renown. A Yorkshireman was as equally appalled as the Italian Obertello. In 1934, J. B. Priestley experienced the Manchester light as: 'a turgid sooty gloom that was neither day nor night'[403] No wonder that Obertello could at first see nothing but the fog:

> The first time I set foot in this city of the north of England was last February. I could not have chosen a worst month or day, as one is the traditional month of fogs, and the other one of the worst foggy day. I remember that, hardly out of one of the central stations on a square of which I could not apprehend not only the proportions but the very existence, the first question to enter my mind was the following: why oh why did God gave us the faculty to see, if seeing is lost here?[404]

As related in Chapter Two, Obertello's view of Manchester was transformed by a newly published book another friend pressed on him, Azeglio Valgimigli's *La Colonia Italiana di Manchester.* Valgimigli had arrived in Manchester in 1881, taught at the University, founded the Manchester Dante Society, and did much to promote the Italian community. Obertello's discovery within this book of the 'solar souls' of his compatriots banished all thought of the smog, especially a certain gentleman bearing a wonderful name:

> One of them was foremost: Doctor Andrea Crestadoro, from Genova, a large spirit, a fertile mind, a gallant man, a gentleman, and to sum up an elect soul and famous man. His memory must be not only remembered, but admired. Therefore, to find it written meticulously and lovingly within the pages of the book was for me a pleasant discovery, akin to encountering a known face, a dear person, a loved being.[405]

Mazzini, in his love for England, had tried to be romantic about London fogs, seeing them as Danteesque visions and later waxing nostalgic about them from the safety of the golden air of Italy. Manchester, however, defeated him on his visit to the Great Treasures in 1857: 'he is quite disgusted with the dirt, smoke and wretchedness of the city'.[406] Smog, soot, dust and poisonous, filthy air seeped through every crevice.

Conversely, the blotched light, the fogs, the heavy shrouding rain and damp soft air of the city have their beauty and fascination. They have been absorbed into the visions of two artists, Pierre Valette,

the French Impressionist and his pupil Lowry, their rain washed images have resonated with thousands ever since. Valette, left the bright skies of Provence for twenty years in Manchester, producing there his truly creative works and losing his wife to the city's pollution in the process, so that he:

> Passed on a pupil greater than himself,
> a cold-eyed giant whose city has no shadows,
> where fogs are shrouds and every man an island.[407]

Crestadoro was no stranger to the polluted atmosphere of Manchester. In 1851 he had improved the Impulsoria in the workshops of Salford, the city then notorious for the lowest life expectancy in England. Once a permanent resident in Manchester, his reaction to pollution was join others in devising effective fire grates, typical of his 'ingenious notions' approach to life.

## Mancunian

Takatora Sato, in a thesis on Manchester Free Libraries, commented that:

> Dr. Crestadoro was a scholarly man of wide interests and was the author of a number of scientific, bibliographical, political and economic pamphlets and also patented mechanical inventions. Little evidence exists of his life in Manchester but it would be strange if he did not take part in the intellectual life of the city.[408]

Crestadoro certainly did take part. Whilst his position placed him in a wide network of Manchester civic, cultural and social life, his genial company was sought for its own sake. The Manchester Library Archive preserves several warm invitations to him to attend various dinners, lectures and events and he is on friendly terms with local theatres and music groups. In March 1873, the St. Michael's Literary Society at Hulme invited him to give a scientific lecture. Another typical invitation is from Frank Orde Rusepini, a Manchester poet, who pressed him on 2 March 1869 to come to the Literary Society meeting at Alderley, sending him train times. He wanted to borrow Hansard for the debate and added: 'We are sadly short of Tories & would be glad to welcome any of that persuasion if you know any good debaters on that side.' Julia Gaskell, Mrs Gaskell's daughter, wrote to him on several occasions, with a tone of respect and liking for the scholarly Dr. Crestadoro who helped her on various matters. Crestadoro took no active part in local politics as Axon noted in the obituary. However, his name appears at charitable meetings to raise funds for relieving distress such as the Great Fire at Chicago as reported in the *Manchester Guardian* for 14 October 1871.

Crestadoro formed friendships with colleagues, entered different social circles and became a notable figure. Certain readers' names appear regularly in the Library In Books. Their letters are informal, addressed directly to Crestadoro, often asking for specific loans or information but all indicating their confident friendship with him. Amongst these are Frank Spencer of Pendleton Alum Works, Charles Thompson of the Smyrna Twist Mills and Joseph Thompson of the Pin Mill, Ardwick who greatly admired Crestadoro's catalogue as soon as it was out in May 1864: 'a great benefit to the town generally'. These industrialists with a bent to literature, obviously blossomed in their contact with the scholarly Crestadoro.

The rare personal views we have of Crestadoro are all from his years in Manchester. Despite the pressures of his post he remained active in his enthusiasms for social sciences, economy and technology.

Many were appalled by the poverty, pollution, industrial density of Manchester but Crestadoro

seems to have taken it all lightly. He was naturalized in 1866, sponsored by four Manchester friends, William Goulden Thompson, Councillor Harry Rawson, John Johnson and John Alfred Daniel. Crestadoro was proud of his city, regarding himself as Mancunian.

## Hard Times

Crestadoro arrived in Manchester at a grim time, the Lancashire cotton famine. The economic crisis of this 1861to1865 period, the thousands of people put out of work and the relief efforts all had impact on the Free Libraries. As the branch librarians often commented, book issues always rose in severe times, the rooms were intolerably overcrowded, and this was especially so in the first years of the cotton famine. Credland noted:

> Instead of sinking into a condition of utter despair under the cruelty of their sufferings, thousands of the factory hands during the cotton famine passed their days in the reading rooms of the Free Libraries, and by the reading of books or papers diverted their attention for time from their distress, or possibly were directed to means of alleviating it.[409]

Crestadoro's years in Manchester also intersected with the challenging first decades of Free Libraries, following the Act of 1850 and the suceeding amendments in the legislation. Manchester was, to all intents and purposes the first to start a major Free Library, only a decade before Crestadoro's arrival. Crestadoro entered a rapidly changing period where both Manchester and the other Free Libraries were establishing the foundation of the service, wrestling with a wide range of issues across buildings, collections, staff and readers. This was all new ground for the Committees and Librarians. Crestadoro played a key role in the consultation between Free Libraries, the mutual support from which emerged a new professional body.

Within Manchester Crestadoro had to deal with the growth of a branch network, Manchester's strategy of bringing the books to the people, as well as the literal collapse of the ill-situated Campfield building in 1877. W. G. Fry, a later Deputy Chief Librarian of Manchester Public Libraries, summed it up: 'The period during which Dr. Crestadoro occupied the position of Principal Librarian was on the whole one of stress and some anxiety.'[410]

## Mrs. Crestadoro

There is sparse information for Mrs. Crestadoro. Smiles, Radford and Axon occasionally asked to be remembered to her. As mentioned in Chapter Eight, the warmest comment was from Mrs. Johnson on the Isle of Man who described her as 'your excellent wife'.

The documentary evidence is rather confused, not unusually, as any family historian knows. Variations of names and incorrect transcriptions are responsible for many a red herring. Her age fluctuates from thirty-three in 1851, to forty-five in 1871, fifty-eight in 1881 and sixty-nine when she died in 1888.

She is listed as Margaret Elizabeth Chittleburgh, Spinster, daughter of James Chittleburgh, Gentleman, on the marriage certificate for 17 March 1864 at the Old Church St Pancras. In the 1871 census she is recorded as Eliza M Crestadoro, Married, forty-five, born London. This would make her born in 1826. In Crestadoro's will of January 2, 1874, she is described as: 'my wife Catherine Margaret', an odd change of name. He leaves her one hundred pounds as well as: 'all my furniture, plate, household effects, wearing apparel, books, pictures and papers and all consumable stores of which I shall die possessed'. This is just as well for the will is proved to only cover one hundred pounds.

Given the surname is so unusual, when I first came across the marriage I took the chance of phoning the Chittleburghs listed for London in the BT online directory. I was lucky at the first contact, a helpful lady who wasn't sure exactly who Margaret Elizabeth was, but felt she was likely to be a member of her family as they were strongly connected with the Old Church St Pancras. Her own father had been a verger. She mentioned a researcher, Pauline Dallman, who had been exploring the Chittleboroughs/Chittleburghs. Pauline Dallman became a valuable and sympathetic contact. In the Records Office Pauline Dallman identified the family tree for Margaret Elizabeth as follows:

> However I have just found a marriage for a James Chittleborough and a Margaret Watts in St. George Bloomsbury on July 29 1804. They had a son William Watts, who was born 17 April 1811 and baptised 12 April 1812, also a daughter MARGARET ELIZABETH Chittleborough baptised 11 April 1813. They were then living at The Turk's Head, King Street, Holborn and James was a Victualler.[411]

Pauline Dallman tracked down earlier references in the 1851 indexes for Holborn. There is a Margaret Chittleburgh, daughter of James, whose age is given as thirty-three - and so born in 1818.

The addresses in London give a clue on how Crestadoro and Margaret may have met.

The 1851 Census lists the Chittleburghs at 20 Great Ormond Street, the home of Jane Richley, Margaret's married sister. James Chittleburgh is identified as Jane's father.

In 1857 Crestadoro was living at 36 King Street, Holborn: he wrote to Panizzi from that address on 23 February. This address put him in the proximity of The Turk's Head where her father, James Chittleborough, was landlord. My guess is that they met at The Turk's Head and Margaret suggested his move to Great Ormond Street. In 1861 and in 1862 both she and Crestadoro were living in Great Ormond Street as close neighbours.

The 1861 Census records Margaret Elizabeth Chittleburgh as a schoolmistress, living as a lodger at 20 Great Ormond Street. Her sister, Jane Richley, now down as a widow, is the head of the household and her father is there as an 'annuist', meaning retired. The 1861 Census lists Crestadoro as resident at 18 Great Ormond Street, in a household of family. lodgers and servants. In September 1861, he wrote from 19 Great Ormond Street to Victor Hugo, and from the same address in again in 1862 in letters to Manchester Free Libraries. This may signify a postal number change rather than a move of lodgings.

The family connection remained. In August 1869, Crestadoro wrote to Axon that he was staying with family at 20 Great Ormond Street before he departed to Brussels.

It is frustrating that Mrs Crestadoro is such a pale shadow with no details even of where she was a schoolmistress. There were plenty of progressive schools around Great Ormond Street, including the one founded by Mazzini. Perhaps both she and Crestadoro were involved there, perhaps they met admiring the blossom in Queen Square or just on the doorsteps of 19 and 20 Great Ormond Street. Crestadoro from the one description we have, was a handsome man and certainly a romantic figure with his inventions, books in three languages, travels and enterprises amongst booksellers, printers, indexers and the BM.

## Living in Manchester

The Crestadoros are recorded as living on two streets in Manchester. Both houses have now vanished.

According to the Manchester Rate Books, they were at 23, 19, and finally 21 Rumford Street between 1866 and 1876. But this was a time when postal addresses were being changed on a huge scale by municipal authorities as they started to control the chaos of urban development. Progress and regulation saw programmes of widening, cleaning and re-organizing the streets: 'This process made the city more legible and negotiable for pedestrians, cabdrivers and postmen.'[412] It is more likely that the numbers changed than the Crestadoros kept migrating from one house to another. The 1871 census also records a Mary A Caffrel, age 19, born Salford, as a general domestic servant at 21Rumford Street, suggesting a modest household.

Old photos of Rumford Street show solid houses, which look largely like superior back to backs. There was a difference, as my mother remembered, between the lower end of Rumford Street and the grander houses of what was called Upper Rumford Street where the Gaskells lived at No. 121. Mrs.Gaskell in a letter to Tottie Fox dated 29 May 1849 described this as follows:

> our home is a mile and a half from the very middle of Manchester; the last house countrywards of an interminably long street, the other end of which touches the town, while we look into fields from some of our windows; not very pretty or rural fields it must be owned, but in which the children can see cows milked and hay made in summer time.[413]

Judging by assorted online memories and photographs, Crestadoro's house was probably three storeys high with a habitable attic but clustered in with shops, businesses and the better off lower middle and working classes. Rumford Street, Chorlton on Medlock, was razed for Manchester University developments.

They moved to 155 Upper Brook Street in 1876 or 1877, possibly because Crestadoro's nephew had come to live with them. Some sources also give 137 and 153 Upper Brook Street, again probably reflecting a post number change. The move to Upper Brook Street represents the next step up, these are larger terraced houses, not opening straight onto the street but with steps and a small patch of garden. The change must reflect Crestadoro's confidence in his position and security. Upper Brook Street was a good address, from it runs Plymouth Grove where Mrs Gaskell's house at No.84 is now restored, and the houses would have been desirable residences for professional, managerial and trade families. Ardwick Green with its pond was just down the road. 155 Upper Brook Street was demolished in the 1950s, its environs transformed into the bleak landscape of car showrooms which I detested as a child.

## Getting Around

Did Crestadoro walk to work from Rumford Street or later from Upper Brook Street? The distance to Campfield from both is under two miles, which is a comparatively easy stretch in an age where people were used to commuting on foot.

The Stage Coach Act of 1832 allowed passengers to be picked up at any point, greatly improving local services. Fares were high, for example, five shillings from Rochdale to Manchester. From 1810, hackney carriages operated within a four mile radius of St Ann's Square so this would have been an occasional option for Crestadoro. It is more likely that Crestadoro caught the horse omnibus. In 1824 John Greenwood, a toll keeper in Pendleton, set up a horse omnibus running into Manchester, another first for the city. By 1850, his omnibuses were serving sixty-four routes. Others joined in. Notably, in 1852 a Mr. McEwan produced a magnificent double decker, three horse omnibus at a threepenny fare for the forty-two passengers (seventeen inside and twenty-five on top).

Greenwood also experimented with an iron tramway in Salford (demolished in 1872), and was involved in forming the Manchester Carriage Company in 1865. The first horse drawn-tram appeared in Manchester in 1877 and was operating until 1903. One tram, LS53, now in Bury Transport Museum, was resurrected to run in Heaton Park in 2008.

So Manchester being a pioneer in public transport, Crestadoro would have had plenty of choice, hackney carriage, horse omnibus, horse tram or walking.

To complete the picture it is important to realise how congested and hectic the streets would have been with all sorts of traffic converging on the city centre. The transport network of canals, roads and railways poured goods and people through and around the city – the industrial beehive. Goods, fuel, raw supplies and people had to be moved around the transport points of railways stations and wharves – canals brought in food but much also came via road. All converged on the main roads and into the narrow streets and courtyards of the business quarter, much of which still remains intact.

Strategies were developed to cope: roads were widened, new ones constructed and large quantities of Welsh granite setts purchased and laid as durable surfaces. It is only in the twenty-first century with pedestrian precincts and network of trams, that walking has become easier across Manchester city centre. Although Manchester Council seems fairly unconcerned about trams and citizens criss-crossing in a perilous mix.

The vehicular and pedestrian mayhem of the streets explains a recurring concern of the Manchester Library Letter Books and Minutes. It was the general custom for workers in the industrial north to return home at midday for dinner, and the documents for the Free Libraries contain many discussions about meal timings for the staff. The length and difficulty of the twice or even thrice daily commute was significant. Some library staff felt that no sooner had they got home for dinner than they needed to set out again for the journey back. Whenever he could, Crestadoro solved these difficulties by moving staff to branches nearer their homes.

## Merchant Princes

By the time Crestadoro arrived in 1862 Manchester, despite the fluctuations of trade, the Cotton Famine and the desperate condition of many of its citizens, was well on its way to civic magnificence. Certainly the air was as lethal as plague, the streets filthy, and life brutal and short for those in the foul slums. But even in their proximity, civic control established new buildings, started to establish a pure water supply from the hills of Cheshire and later the Lake District. As Thomas Kelly comments:

> Yet by 1850, whatever critical Manchester residents as different as Elizabeth Gaskell and Frederick Engels may have felt to the contrary, the bitterest and crudest of the local labour struggles were over. It may be argued that the building of the Free Trade Hall in 1842 on part of the site of the Peterloo massacre of 1819, symbolised the new, if excessively middle-class, approach to social problems. The projected change of use - on the other side of Deansgate - of Robert Owen's Hall of Science into Manchester's first Free Public Library was perhaps at least equally symbolic.[414]

A significant reason for this energetic middle class activism and reform was the fact that the merchants and industrialists lived in the city centre or close to it in the encircling inner suburbs. They may have thought in the early part of the nineteenth century that they had escaped the city but it soon overtook their leafy retreats. Through the zoning of the city into middle class quarters, it

was possible to entirely avoid the hellish tenements of the poor, as Friedrich Engels was the first to properly analyse, but not the pollution of water, air and the damp atmosphere that was good for cotton but trapped the inhabitants in fogs and foulness. Out of self interest, local improvements had to be made to ensure the health and safety of the middle classes. More altruistically, Manchester was their city and they would make it the best.

The merchant princes of Manchester decorated both their own walls and the civic galleries and buildings with Pre-Raphaelite paintings and frescoes. The Pre-Raphaelites did well out of their Cottonopolis patrons. The merchant princes served on the city council, supported charities, sat on hospital committees and had fingers in every pie. The Noncomformist tradition was strong, the political climate liberal and there was a pattern of shared culture with the ambitious working people as expressed through the theatres, the great Art Treasures Exhibition (1857), the Hallé Orchestra (1858), and again the Free Libraries. How far the majority of slum-dwellers benefited from all this is debatable: 'So they made of it a city almost in the Greek sense, coherent in culture and temper, perhaps all too Greek. For the slum-dwellers were the equivalent of the Greek slaves: they had no share among the democracy of citizens.'[415]

When Crestadoro applied to Manchester in 1862, it was largely the era of the second generations of these merchant princes, of the major families and of the dynasties of councillors and even of Mayors, with the Potters being father and son.

The Potters were originally from Yorkshire, rising from turnip farmers to drapers in Tadcaster and thence, at the start of the nineteenth century, as dealers in calico and fustians on the Manchester Exchange, founding a major mercantile house there. Sir Thomas Potter had been the main driver for Manchester's charter in 1838, and became first Mayor of Manchester between 1838 and 1840. His son, Sir John Potter, became Mayor in 1848, and he was determined Manchester would have a Free Library. From their fine houses, from their warehouses, offices, and mills they kept a close eye not only on their businesses but also on the institutions, societies and committees they ruled.

Later on, the merchant princes abandoned their city, taking their families to the clean air of rural Cheshire, with Manchester the source of their wealth but a dirty smudge on the horizon. The signs had in fact been there from the start, the very reason for fashionable Ardwick and later Oxford Road, as W. R. Chambers noted in 1849/50: 'Between these two regions - between the dull stacks of warehouses and the snug airy dwellings of the suburbs - lies the great mass of smoky, dingy, sweltering and toiling Manchester.'[416]

## Unitarian Circles in Manchester

The Unitarians brought an academic and civic richness to Manchester.

In the early nineteenth century two groups were predominant in shaping political, social and civic reform in Manchester, establishing both the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and the *Manchester Guardian*. The Little Circle founded in 1815 was based on the Cross Street Chapel and the core membership was Unitarian. Here Thomas and Richard Potter joined with Joseph Brotherton, important links for the future Free Library movement. The second Circle started in 1821 and of these twelve members, seven were Unitarian.

The Working Men's Committee raised funds for the new Free Library collections at Manchester, many of these men came from John Potter's Unitarian Cross Street chapel community.

The Unitarian network in Manchester was ubiquitous in libraries, education and reform. Thomas Baker, the Chair of the Library Committee in Crestadoro's time, had trained as a Unitarian minister

and wrote a history of Cross Street Chapel.

Crestadoro's friend Axon, brought up as a Baptist, became a staunch member of Cross Street Chapel. The account of his funeral is a roll call of the great and good of Manchester. C. P. Scott, the influential editor and owner of the *Manchester Guardian* was strongly Unitarian and that inheritance still shapes the *Guardian* today and brands its readership as liberal.

Crestadoro's application was supported by the prominent UnitarianWilliam Shaen, a powerful name as the close friend of the Gaskells and the husband of one of the famous Unitarian sisters, the Winkworths.

Did Crestadoro join the Unitarian congregation in Manchester? There is one very faint hint that he may have in Bellhouse's referring to 'our Chapel' and 'our minister' in his letter of 14 November 1865, following Mrs Gaskell's death on 12 November. But no real weight can be placed on what may be no more than natural phrasing. Advantageous as it might be, I suspect becoming a Unitarian would have been a step too far for Crestadoro. He had married in the Church of England, his wife's relative was the verger at the Old Church St Pancras and he probably just stayed with it. If he did become a Unitarian he may not have attended the Cross Street Chapel but the one on Upper Brook Street that now lies in ruins. His funeral service was at Ardwick Cemetery, performed by the standard Church of England minister there. Only a Church of England service was permitted in the non-denominational Ardwick Cemetery Chapel.

## Rich and Poor in Manchester

Manchester still has a powerful resonance from its dominant past, when Manchester cotton ruled the world and the great ships of all nations sailed up through the Manchester Ship Canal. More darkly, it has the inheritance of its industrial pollution, slums, brutality and the 'very intelligent but painfully unhealthy and sickly population' as Queen Victoria described it.[417]

In the twenty-first century Manchester is ambitious to reclaim its dominance, to: 'play an integral part in helping Manchester and the north of England provide a genuine cultural counterbalance to London'[418]. A major new arts centre, Home, opened in May 2015, replacing the iconic Cornerhouse, and there are plans for a £78 million arts development on the Granada Studios site, to be named after the Madchester record label The Factory. It is certainly true that: 'Manchester has never been a city that lacked cultural ambition'[419].

In the same month, there were riots and protests as the anti-austerity protesters are refused permission to enter Manchester Central Library (refurbished at a cost of £50 million in 2014). The *Guardian* represented this as the homeless being barred, an interpretation strongly refuted on the Council website:

> The Guardian newspaper's claim that we are banning homeless people from entering Central Library is blatantly untrue.
>
> We have never enforced a general ban on homeless people from entering the library. Instead, we have been forced to ban members of the protest group which has camped outside on St Peter's Square after they stormed the library on two occasions with the intention of occupying the building.[420]

So, more echoes of the past, and a society as divided by inequality as it was in Crestadoro's time. Some would see in this episode corroboration that libraries were always set up predominantly for the respectable poor and for the well behaved middle classes. Others would see that libraries are at

the forefront of fielding social problems that are not of their making. It is interesting to bear this current conflict in mind when looking at how the Committee and Crestadoro dealt with the extremes they encountered.

## A New Profession

Crestadoro's involvement with the Manchester Free Libraries intersects with the time when the whole library landscape was changing. His years in Manchester, from 1862 to his death in 1879, cover a major stage in the development of a radical new service that only a few far sighted reformers had envisaged: 'We can say with confidence, however, that at the opening of the nineteenth century the idea of a nation-wide, publicly supported library service, open to all classes of the community was still undreamed of.'[421]

In the years he served in Manchester, Crestadoro substantially contributed to this transformation of vision into reality. He lived through turbulent times as the Manchester Free Libraries struggled with lack of catalogues, unsuitable and dangerous buildings, perilous heating and lighting systems, inadequate funding and colossal staff turnover. The Manchester Free Libraries Committee, Crestadoro and the staff nevertheless made huge progress, and by the time of his death there was good cause to be proud of what had been accomplished. The public library movement itself had expanded, roughly at three or four new authorities per year during Crestadoro's time, and he had been generous with his advice, support and gifts of catalogues and reports. Additionally, Crestadoro was actively involved in the creation of a new professional body.

The first librarians of the Free Libraries, open to all comers, had basically to determine their own profession and learn as they went on.

## Manchester Libraries and Societies

Innumerable new societies and libraries were established in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in Manchester some of which still survive. There was the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society (1781), the Portico Library (1806), the Royal Manchester Institution (now Manchester Art Gallery) (1823), the Natural History Society (1821) and the Manchester Statistical Society (1833), the first of its kind and a pioneer of social sciences. The Athenaeum Club, the venue of choice for rich middle class cultural and social life, opened in 1839. The Chetham Society with the mission of printing copies of rare manuscripts on Cheshire and Lancashire history was founded in 1843. Owen's College, the embryo of Manchester University, opened on Quay Street in 1851, and the Manchester Literary Club in 1862. The Manchester Library Archives are full of references to the activities of this network of societies, most of which built up their own collections. Crestadoro was involved in many of these, both as Chief Librarian and as an individual. His own enthusiasms were met by his involvement in the Manchester Society for the Promotion of Scientific Industry and in the National Association for the Promotion of Social Sciences.

Crestadoro lived in a city that had a remarkable passion for books, culture, science and scholarship. Sources show Crestadoro in regular contact with the Portico Library, the Athenaeum, Chetham's, the Mechanics' Institution, Owen's College and many more besides. Chetham's was and is famous internationally.

In 1653, Sir Humphrey Chetham, cotton merchant, banker, landowner and Parliamentarian, kept his vast fortune safe from Charles II, and took care of his soul, by willing it for the foundation of a school and library in the ancient fifteenth century buildings that border Manchester Cathedral. Technically Chetham's was open to all, though as admitted to the 1849 Select Committee on

Libraries, mainly scholars tended to use it. The library was not open in the evening, effectively debarring working people.

Chetham's Library and one of the founders of the Chetham's Society, the charismatic James Crossley, played a part both in the establishment of the Manchester Free Libraries and in Crestadoro's career. There was an undercurrent of opinion that perhaps Chetham's should become part of the Free Libraries but this never solidified.

Axon described the whole network of library collections in his book, published in 1877, *Handbook of the Public Libraries of Manchester and Salford*[422]. ('Public' here is in the sense of libraries with collections that could be consulted by members or select visitors.)

Crestadoro was driven to add to the wealth of all this by developing the Reference Library into the BM of the North, the vision inherited from Sir John Potter. Crestadoro was proudly prone to use this term.

## Sources for Crestadoro's Manchester Life

The sources used to describe Crestadoro's life in Manchester are predominantly the Letters, Reports and Minutes of the Free Library Committee.

Manchester recorded the evolution of its Free Libraries in minute detail, through annual reports and accounts, official minutes of the Free Libraries Committee and its various Sub Committees ,and letter books. The activities were often reported in local newspapers, engaging readers and officials in further correspondence. Crestadoro's letters in response to such queries are another source for understanding both his views and his activities.

The Manchester Free Libraries Committee was answerable to the Council and to the rate-payers. Accounts had to be meticulous. Committee and staff were conscious of developing a totally new service with no models to follow, and the need to record both their struggles and their progress: 'Everything had to be patiently hammered out bit by bit: woven with as much care as Manchester bestowed upon some of its choice textiles.'[423]

By a miracle, the Manchester Library Letter books have survived, a brittle hoard of scrapbooks that open like telescopes through time onto those long-dead librarians and their readers. The Campfield Library Sub Committee in the Minutes of 19 July 1861, recorded the resolution to purchase a letter file to safeguard their history: 'The Librarian also to procure a letter File for the preservation and Indexing of the more important Letters received in Library service.'

Fortunately, there seems to have been a liberal interpretation of 'important'. The Committee's intention was probably to keep only the most formal and impersonal official letters, but many minor letters and notes have also survived in the files.

The leather bound scrapbooks open their broken spines to a colourful variety of different letter sizes, types of paper, print, handwriting, inks and attachments. There are odds and ends of penny black stamps, scraps of sample materials, rusty pins, headed envelopes, postcards and official forms. These are the In Letter Books – the contents glued into the bound volumes, straggling across years and months and occasionally with frustrating gaps in coverage.

The Out Letters are very different in appearance from the colourful In Letter scrapbooks. The official letters are bound into files and they are uniform in size, texture and ink. They differ mainly in the degree with which the reproductive process has dampened and blurred the writing. The paper is as thin as tissue paper and in many cases there is nothing left of the correspondence but faded

brown smears of ink or once damp pages fused together.

The Out Letters are valuable from a technical view as well as for their content.

Manchester Free Libraries were up to date in their use of duplication and this has preserved the Out Letters to some extent. The tissue paper enabled the process where the writer used a metal stylus and thin so the text could be read correctly from the other side. Or the flimsy tissues might not be from carbon copying but were wetted pages from a Watts machine. No one in the Manchester Archives seems to know the answer. However, the Manchester Free Library Committee minutes record another interesting item for 5 November 1858, the purchase of a Copying Press and a Letter Copying book.

The Minute Books are in good condition and consistently structured. The Minutes of the Free Library Committee, as I have looked at them from 1859 through to 1880, follow a standard formula in reporting. The Minutes were recorded in careful handwriting in large, ruled paper books, handsomely bound and with some exceptions, thoroughly indexed in a preliminary A-Z sequence. Three or four different secretaries seem to have been involved over the years and only one is prone to making large blots and hurried writing. A member of the library staff acted as secretary and, unless away ill or on leave, covered all the meetings. Sutton was chosen by Thomas Baker for the task and he developed the role beyond minute taking, as Thomas Baker entrusted much business to him.

The Free Library Committee held its monthly meetings to follow closely on the various Sub Committee meetings so their reports could be given. The same day was always used, with various adjustments as to day and time over the years. Special Meetings were called as necessary.

The Minutes record who was present, followed by expenditures, donations and Sub Committee reports. Generally, only the Chair and councillors (fourteen in number) attended, though members of staff could be brought in to account for themselves – which must have been a horrific ordeal. Occasionally, readers who had been caught stealing items or cutting pages from books or newspapers were spared arrest and given the alternative of apologizing in person before the Committee. The Minutes are detailed, though probably it was Sutton who instigated a ‘the usual reports were read’ line and just picked out key points. On occasion, the Minutes include full details of particular problems or cases and copies of the printed annual reports.

## Crestadoro’s Context

In effect, Manchester developed the first significant Free Library service and Crestadoro as its third Chief Librarian was under continual pressure and review from the Free Library Committee. Secure as his post must have seemed in comparison with his previous enterprises, it was always dependant upon the approval of the Free Library Committee.

As is stated in the Free Library Minutes at the start of the new Committee year, their responsibility was:

> to manage and transact all matters and purposes relating to the control and management of the Public Free Library and the Officers and Servants employed in connection therewith, and with full power and authority to do all which may be necessary for its proper care and maintenance.[424]

The Committee, however powerful, had to win approval from the Council where some were hostile to their aspirations. John Potter had confided in Edwards on several occasions: ‘his resentment at

the manner in which some leading men in the Manchester Council had tried repeatedly to put obstacles in his way'[425] in the establishment of the Free Library. Edwards was severe on Potter's moral failings, his taste for wine and good company, but he saw his conduct as a Councillor, Mayor (three times elected) and MP as exemplary. John Potter had guided the Committee from the very start in January 1851: the 29 October 1858 Minutes record both the sincere grief of the members at his death and their determination to follow his inspirational lead in ensuring the future of his precious library service.

The formidable Councillor, Thomas Baker, became Vice-Chairman of the Free Library Committee in 1861, and Chairman in 1864, retaining the post until 1884. He was not a man to cross and it says much for Crestadoro's genial nature that he managed to stay on the right side of Baker throughout these years and even earned his public praise. A strong Unitarian, the only Mayor of Manchester who actually served as a minister, Thomas Baker had a dark reputation as one anecdote reveals:

> Alexander Gordon, in a letter to a friend 20 March, 1907 remarks, 'Baker was an uncommonly good hater… While he spoke bitterly of everybody, he reserved the extremity of his bitterness for his fellow-students at York. He wrote his history of Cross Street Chapel, and told me himself that his chief pleasure in publishing it would be that he had managed to exclude every reference to Mr Gaskell except his bare name. He wanted me to edit it but I couldn't fall in with his peculiar line; so that it was edited by Mr C.W. Sutton of the Free Library…[426]

Baker did not acknowledge Sutton's help in this book, but the materials were given to the Free Library and Sutton produced a bibliography from them, so that presumably was his reward. Thomas Baker's dominant personality and overpowering will to be in charge has meant he, not Crestadoro, was remembered as the energetic developer of Manchester Free Libraries in this critical period. The obituaries on his death in 1886 all attribute the success to Baker, and this is deserved in many respects, but others too played critical parts. The Minutes reveal how Baker suppressed Crestadoro's initial enthusiasms.

## Measured by Salary

Requests for salary increases from all levels of staff form a regular feature in the summer months of the Library Branch Sub Committees and Committee Minutes. It was a laborious process, many requests were turned down and increases for senior staff had to be finally approved by the Council. The letters often have a personal note, with sometimes a desperate appeal for help.

On 27 April 1870, the Campfield Sub Committee discussed Crestadoro's written request of 5 April for a salary increase to £350. (His previous increase from £250 to £300 had occurred in May 1866, as reported in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* of 15 March.) The reputation of the catalogues formed part of his argument:

> Mr Crestadoro begs most respectfully to submit to the consideration of the Committtee his claim for an increase of salary. He has been in the service of the Corporation for eight years and held the office of Chief Librarian for 6 years during which he has given his undivided attention to the duties of his office. By these faithful services under the direction of the Committee and their Chairman the Manchester Free Libraries have attained the first rank among such institutions in the United Kingdom and abroad and the catalogues of the Lending as well that of the Reference Department are used as models. Mr Crestadoro devotes the whole of his time and thought to the discharge of his duties which are growing

> in importance and are laborious in the variety of detail. For these reasons he trusts that the Committee having done him the favour of placing on record their appreciation of his services will kindly grant him an increase of salary.

The request was approved by the Sub Committee, Committee and finally by the Council as reported in the *Manchester Times* of 4 June 1870: ‘Mr. Walker divided the Council against the proposal to increase Professor Crestadoro’s salary from £300 to £350, and found four supporters. The motion was carried by a large majority.’

On the occasions when his requests were rejected, Crestadoro accepted the decision with dignity but ensured the Committee were still aware of his dedication, as recorded in the Minutes for 24 June 1874: ‘I am content to feel that I deserve it and shall contrive to deserve it by fulfiling my duty and would at present prefer to withdraw my application and look still to the future.’

His salary was increased from £350 to £400 in May 1875. It is a token of his worth that Crestadoro received substantial salary increases, reaching this high final level. Edwards' requests were always refused, and it looks from the Minutes that Smiles never progressed from his initial £200.

Manchester certainly had a bargain in the third Chief Librarian and one who repaid them with his pride in the city and his gratitude.

[400] Kevin Cummins, *Manchester: Looking for the Light through the Pouring Rain* (London: Faber, 2009)

[401] W. G. Sebald, *The Emigrants*, (London: Harvill, 1996) p.169

[402] Paul Morley, Chapter 1, in Cummins, *Manchester*, p. 008/009

[403] J. B. Priestley, *English Journey. Being a rambling but truthful account of what one man saw and heard and felt and thought during a journey through England during the autumn of the year 1933* (London: Heinemann, 1934)

[404] Obertello, 'Genovesi nel mondo Andrea Crestadoro'

[405] Obertello, 'Genovesi nel mondo Andrea Crestadoro'

[406] Lacaita, *An Italian Englishman*, p.80

[407] John Ward, *Selected Poems 1968-1995* (Tarantula, 1996) 'Valette in Manchester', p.62

[408] Takatora Sato, 'The Origin and Early Development of the Manchester Public Libraries 1852-1914, (PhD, University of Manchester, 2004) p.271

[409] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.100

[410] Fry, 'The Manchester Public Libraries 1852-1938'

[411] Pauline Dallman, e-mail to author, 26 June 2002

[412] Chris Otter, *The Victorian Eye A Political History of Light and Vision in Britaion, 1800-1910* (Chicago: UCP, 2008) p.78

413 Carolyn Lambert, *The Meanings of Home in Elizabeth Gaskell's Fiction* (Brighton: Victorian Secrets, 2013) pp.32-33

[414] Munford, *Edward Edwards,* p.88

[415] Katharine Chorley, *Manchester Made Them* (London: Faber, 1950) p. 139

[416] Bradshaw, *Visitors to Manchester*, p. 55

[417] L.D. Bradshaw (compiler and ed.) *Visitors to Manchester A Selection of British and Foreign Visitors' descriptions of Manchester from c1538 to 1865* (Neil Richardson, 1987) p. 60

[418] 'Manchester to get new £78m theatre named The Factory', (3 December 2014) bbc.co.uk

[419] 'The Factory Manchester: A new, £78m art space for the city Manchester', Posted by Susie Stubbs 3 December 2014 www.creativetourist.com

[420] Sara Todd, 'Response to claims homeless people have been banned from Central Library' (Manchester.gov.uk)

[421] Kelly, *A History of Public Libraries*, p.4

[422] Axon, *Handbook of the Public Libraries*

[423] Thomas Greenwood, *Edward Edwards*, p.113

[424] MA, Library Committee Minutes 28 November 1856

[425] Edwards, *Free Town Libraries* p.64

[426] Herbert McLachlan, *Essays and Addresses* (Manchester: MUP, 1950) p.103

# Chapter Fifteen: The Dust of Life

> I shake off there what Dr Johnson calls ‘the dust of life’ (and I think there is more of that dust, as well as all other dirt and dust in Manchester than anywhere else).[427]

## Thomas Baker

Once Baker became Chair of the Free Library Committee in November 1864, Crestadoro must have realised he would inevitably take a back seat.

Thomas Baker, knighted for his public service in 1883, energetically managed the Libraries during Crestadoro’s time and is credited with their development. Credland attributed to Baker the provision of Boys’ Rooms, the transfer to the Old Town Hall, the employment of women and Sunday opening. Credland does not even mention Smiles, Crestadoro and Sutton, although he does suggest Baker did not quite do it all alone:

> During his nearly twenty-two years of office as Chairman of the Committee, he had the satisfaction of seeing the institutions under their charge grow in numbers and usefulness almost beyond his largest hope. Many important changes in the management of them were introduced by him, or accomplished by his advocacy[428]

On his death on 17 April 1886, there was much acclaim of the public service he had given to Manchester as Councillor, Alderman, Mayor (twice) and magistrate, and especially of his dedication to the Free Libraries. When he died he was still serving on the Free Libraries, Watch, Art Gallery and Town Hall Committees. Little of Baker’s character emerges from these civic pieces, but what there is indicates a driven man, merciless where his authority was challenged. The anecdote related previously of his hatred for William Gaskell corroborates this view. As the

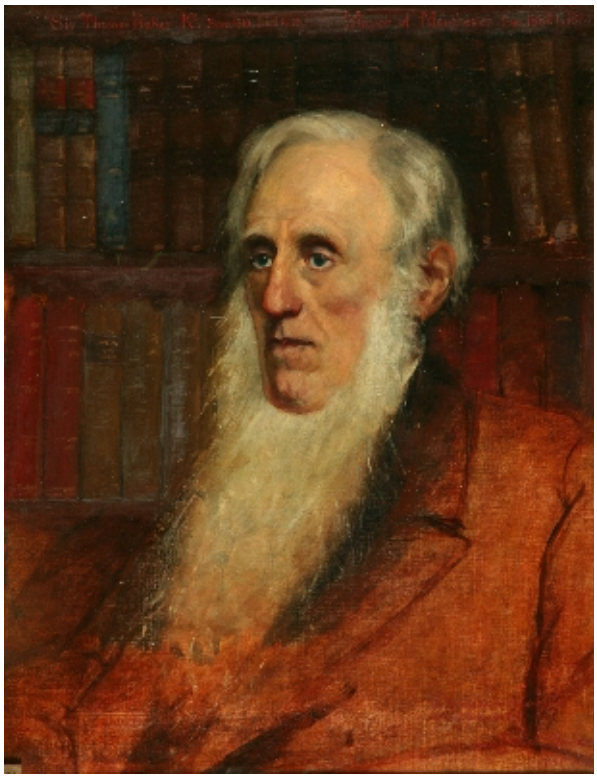

Fig.29 Thomas Baker

Minutes reveal, Baker was a dangerous man to cross.

Credland admired Baker, noting his hatred of any political controversy in the Municipal Councils, his 'profound sense of justice and right' and that: 'He would never take a mean advantage, and was ever an honest and straightforward opponent.' But he also describes him as: 'strong, imperative and wilful'. This is the rather terrifying pen portrait of the man Crestadoro had to deal with on a regular basis for the fifteen years he was Chief Librarian:

> His voice was a power in the Council Chamber. His speaking was clear, cold, and decisive. There was no rhetorical display, no flowers of speech, but a relentless marshalling of fact and argument, which almost invariably carried conviction. Minutely anxious as to facts, he was exact and exacting in their use. Caustic at times, at times bitter, he did not seem to care whether he made friends or enemies, provided only that his words swayed the majority in favour of the view he advocated.[429]

## Crestadoro and the Committee

Crestadoro repaid the Committee's confidence in appointing him as Chief Librarian: he avoided conflict but largely achieved his own ends. A man who had been a Piarist priest knew how to use tactful acquiescence. He was also adept at using the Committee to end difficult correspondence, replying to the Rev. J. Gornall that: 'it is no part of my duty to inquire into the decisions of the Committee to whom I am only a servant.'[430]

He neatly projected the view of being subordinated yet essential in his successful bid for an increase of salary on 22 March 1855. His wording combined the requisite humility with dignified pride in his achievements, and he gave a sense of positive partnership between the Committee and himself:

> Mr Crestadoro begs most respectfully to apply for an increase in salary. he has been in the service of the Free Library Cmte since 1861 and has held the office of Chief Librarian since 1864 during which time he has always endeavoured to fulfil his duties to the best of his abilities industry & perseverance.
>
> By strict attention to the directions of the Chairman and the Committee he has succeeded in raising the reputation of the Manchester Free Libraries far above what his predecessors could effect. Looking to the importance of the office, the increase during the last few years in its duties and the great increase in the cost of living Mr Crestadoro ventures to hope for a favourable consideration of his request.

Unlike Edwards and Smiles, he coped calmly and patiently with the petty tyrannies. Members of

the Committee frequently paid surprise visits to Campfield and the branches: Crestadoro was soon summoned to answer if any faults were found. Nor could Manchester fall behind any of the other Free Libraries; whilst there was co-operation, mutual visits and comparing of notes, there was also rivalry. Councillor Harry Rawson, dropping in on Birmingham Free Library, returned to Manchester to badger Crestadoro on the unacceptable situation that they had superior forms for overdue books.

Initially, Crestadoro presented enthusiastic ideas to the Committee but soon found that everything needed the Committee's compliance, even the most trivial change.

For example, in the Minutes for 24 November 1869, Crestadoro's request for 'alteration in the position of the counter in the Lending Library' was considered but not granted until the Committee had surveyed the counter and 'concurred in the suggestion.'

The Chief Librarian was not usually present at the Committee meetings: Crestadoro mainly features in the Minutes for standard business or for his reports when he was commissioned to investigate issues such as the guarantor system or overdue books.

Yet he occasionally is there forcefully, precipitating important changes such as the employment of women. He was also enraged by what he called 'the great evil' of the fairs that increasingly caused disruption at Campfield. Otherwise, Crestadoro kept a low profile under the torrent of Baker's leadership. He did occasionally point out his own efforts, mainly when he was seeking an increase in salary.

Much of what engaged Crestadoro was not reported through the Minutes, but emerges in the Letter Books. There was plenty to occupy Crestadoro and he had a wide network of correspondence and interests that took him into other spheres. The cataloguing business remained his, though Baker did try occasionally to interfere.

Over the years, a cordial relationship developed between Crestadoro and the Committee: there is evidence of Crestadoro's opinion being sought before decisions were taken. In 1876, Thomas Baker, responding to Axon's request for giving a talk on book rarities at Campfield, emphasises that he must consult with Mr. Crestadoro before permission can be granted.[431]

Crestadoro had professional status, which the Committee appreciated. He was respected both in Britain and America as an expert librarian, his index catalogues brought fame to Manchester, and he had a scholarly reputation amongst antiquarians, booksellers, writers, and librarians. His odd sidelines in invention, his writings on varied subjects, and his mysterious past can only have added to his allure.

It is now time to look in detail at the Crestadoro's years as Chief Librarian, to see what he coped with and to find clues to his character. He was held in affection by many of his staff, was regarded as sympathetic and liberal but somehow did not command the civic acclaim that others achieved. This was probably because he did not play a part in local politics. There is a conflict in accounts of his being shy and retiring and at the same time genial and sociable. English being a second language perhaps caused some difficulty and he grew tired towards the end. His other interests also occupied him.

## Bricks and Mortar

The Minutes and Letter Books are full of landlords, leases, borrowing funds from the council and contracts. Campfield was an apparent bargain but ended up a nightmare, whilst shops and other

premises converted to branch buildings proved unworkable. The Free Library Committee soon turned to commissioning custom designed libraries. The Minutes record the endless struggles to heat, light and ventilate the buildings; emerging technologies brought in new problems and different factors were in conflict.

The Free Library Committee was very much in charge of the library estate planning, determining the designs for new buildings or renovation of existing ones, dealing in purchase or lease, appointing firms, liaising with the City Surveyor and the Finance Committee and campaigning for expansion or change. Thomas Baker, a lawyer by profession, was totally at home with such business.

The Free Library Committee, as might be expected of Manchester businessmen, was sharply organized for such immense tasks. The Sub Committee structure for each of the branches, including Campfield, worked well and as soon as a new branch was planned or a crisis such as the collapse of Campfield precipitated, a new Sub Committee would be appointed. The whole period from 1850 to the end of Crestadoro's reign in 1879 saw a massive expansion in the library estate.

Looking at the main estates business through the Minutes, Reports and Letter Books the conclusion is that Crestadoro played a supporting role to Baker. But he was the one fully responsible on a day-to-day basis and he would not tolerate poor service from contractors or workmen. Crestadoro dealt routinely with estate matters, the real dust of life of the library service, plumbing, heating, ventilation, lighting and a myriad of other problems. He met the challenges with promptitude and relish. The City Surveyor was on hand and Crestadoro badgered him almost daily with such unsavoury matters as blocked lavatories, gas fumes and hot-oil spillage from the reading lamps.

Misuse of urinals, models of indicators, colour schemes for Campfield, provision of library furniture were not below the notice of the Committees but their role was mainly to approve the reports and actions from Crestadoro and the branch librarians. And there was no lack of problems, from the fabric and locations of the buildings themselves through to heating, lighting, ventilation, cleaning, drinking fountains, and accidents of fire, flood and vandalism. Like old-fashioned advertisements in Victorian books, intriguing names litter the documents: from 'Liverpool stench traps' through to 'Howorth's Patent Revolving Archimedia Screw Ventilators'.

Crestadoro, like Edwards and Smiles before him, needed all the technical skills he could muster to deal with these significant duties. Edwards, son of a bricklayer, had climbed up and inspected the Campfield roof himself in February 1857, warning that 'any long continuance of rain' would penetrate, and recommending that snowboards should be fixed and gutters widened. Crestadoro was happy to examine equipment, energetically arguing with the plumbers, builders, and experts. It must have been a shock to the builders and engineers that the mild and scholarly Doctor Crestadoro was so sharp on practicalities. The improver of the Impulsoria was not a man to be fobbed off with excuses or blinded with trade jargon.

## Library Network Timeline

**1852 Campfield Reference and Lending** rate-supported library opens to the public at Campfield, Byrom Street on 6 September.

**1857 Hulme Branch** opens on 23 November at Stretford Road, first librarian is Charles Dyall. (Branch moved to a larger premises on 9 June 1860, then to a new building in 15 June 1866 adjoining the new Hulme Town Hall.) B. Chadwick succeeded Dyall in 1863.

**1857 Ancoats Branch** opens on 7 December at 190 Great Ancoats Street (previously a shop). John

Mitchell appointed as Branch Librarian and remained until 1871, replaced by Lawrence Dillon. (Branch moved to Every Street in September 1867, designed and built by Alfred Waterhouse and included first branch boys' reading-room.)

**1858** Edward Edwards resigns after much conflict. Succeeded by Robert Wilson Smiles

**1860 Rochdale Road Branch** the first purpose built library branch in Manchester, and in the whole country, opens on 4 June at Livesey Street. James Bellhouse appointed as Branch Librarian and stayed until 1869. Enlarged in 1870 by taking in dwelling space for librarian. D. Houghton Mills succeeded Bellhouse, and resigned in 1877.

**1861-1862** Smiles inaugurates special room for youths at Campfield.

**1862** Crestadoro appointed to produce the Reference Library catalogue.

**1863** Smiles resigns.

**1864** Catalogue completed and published. Crestadoro appointed as Principal Librarian.

**1866 Chorlton and Ardwick Branch** opens at Rusholme Road on 6 October, prestigious new Branch, architect Alfred Waterhouse. J. Taylor Kay appointed as Branch Librarian but dismissed in 1867 and George Boughey appointed.

**1871** First female assistant employed (new facilities required).

**1872 Cheetham Branch,** York Street opens 29 January, adapted from a school building by Mr. Lynde, City Surveyor. The first Branch Librarian, John James Sutton died in 1874. W. R. Credland took over until he moved to Campfield. Replaced by Frank Brindley. Building far too small for the demand and new building, architects Barker and Ellis, opens on 11 February 1878.

**1873 Campfield** building is in drastic state, even with remedial structural work it cannot be used for the library much longer.

**1876** City Surveyor warns Campfield building is dangerous

**1877 Campfield Library** closed and the books removed to the old Town Hall in King Street.

**1878 Campfield Reference Library** reopens in the old Town Hall. (The Lending Library was in storage until it moved in 1882 to the new Branch library in Deansgate.)

**1878** Sunday opening of the reading rooms after much controversy. (Birmingham won the position of first Free Library here: in 1872, the Reference Library was very successfully open to readers on Sundays.)

**1879** Crestadoro dies, succeeded by Charles William Sutton

Thus Crestadoro dealt with the establishment of two new branches, the moves of two existing branches, the collapse of Campfield, the move of the Reference Library to the Old Town Hall and the storage of the Lending Library collections. The opening of Cheetham's completed: 'the chain of libraries encircling the city.'[432]

## Map

This 1870 map (scale of 1/2" to the mile) has been annotated to indicate the main territory of Crestadoro's Manchester life, as it would have been by 1879. The Free Libraries were all within or touching the edge of the slum districts. Deansgate, especially Cupid's Alley and Dyer Court, St. George's and Ancoats were reputed to be the most notorious filthy areas of Manchester, overwhelmed with disease and desperate poverty. These slums encircled the commercial centre and

the respectable working class districts. The branch libraries too formed a chain around the city, which Greenwood described.[433]

Fig.30 Manchester Map

## Nuisances

Although closets and urinals were initially provided for readers, the problems of non readers using them, incidents of 'improper use', soon made the Committee reconsider. By Crestadoro's time, lavatories were definitely not provided for readers. As Crestadoro replied to a query on 7 November 1871: 'We have no public water closet or urinals connected with our Libraries. We formerly had at the Campfield Library but they were soon disused as they formed a nuisance.'

It was not just the need to spend a penny (the phrase that originated with the 1851 Great Exhibition). Working people had to waste precious free time cleaning up before getting to the library, as a J. Williams poignantly explained to Crestadoro in December 1873:

> In the matter of Free Libraries Manchester is ahead of any other city in the world. They are a great benefit to the working classes. As far as I can perceive at present, they are deficient of but one convenience, viz, the lavatory, where a working man could wash the

> grime from his hands and perhaps his face without losing a half or whole hour of his scant leisure, going and returning from his home before he sits down to handle clean books, magazines etc.

The reply is not preserved but it is unlikely his request was met as the Free Libraries Committee had already decided against closets and urinals. Bellhouse reported in December 1864 that his readers were always asking for drinking fountains: 'the great convenience they experienced at Campfield'. Presumably these were eventually installed in the branches.

Members of the public were prone to 'committing nuisances' as they hung around library buildings. For example, on 25 July 1870 Crestadoro contacted the Chief Constable for: 'the removal of loiterers about the doorway of the Hulme Branch library' to avoid this. Again, when the exterior of Campfield was plastered and painted in November 1871, Crestadoro was soon chasing up removal of the hoardings as: 'we find that nuisances are being committed behind the boards at night'.

Lavatories were provided for the staff, but judging by the mentions in the Letter Books they must have dreaded using them, maybe hanging on for a quick dash home at dinner (midday) and tea time. As Crestadoro wrote to the City Surveyor on 25 February 1876: 'The water-closet at the Campfield Library has been out of order for some time past. The seat is in a dilapidated condition, and bad smells proceed from the place, rendering it almost unfit for use.'

Problems persisted and Crestadoro again chases up Mr. Lynde on 7 April 1876: 'The water closet lately repaired here does not act, the discharge pipe being blocked up and the water unable to get down. It cannot be used at present. Would you therefore kindly have it attended to.'

Even more unpleasantly and dangerously, there were the unsanitary problems of adjacent buildings. In this case, on 20 January 1874, Crestadoro contacts the uncompromisingly named Nuisance Committee:

> I beg to inform you that for some time past a strong and disagreeable stench has been noticed by the Readers and Officials of our Branch library on Cheetham Hill Road. It is supposed to arise from the cellar immediately under the Library which has lately been used for the purposes of a closet and ash pit by the inhabitants of the adjoining premises. I should feel obliged if you would kindly have the matter inquired into, as Readers have complained of the smell and the health of the Official seems affected by it.

On the 19 April 1877, Crestadoro contacts Mr. Molineaux to get rid of the rats that are plaguing the Cheetham Branch:

> For some time back the Cheetham Branch library has been infested with rats, which make the assistants' room inhabitable and injures the books. I have had a builder to examine the hole through which the rats come and he reports that the wall beneath is decayed and should be attended to by the landlord.

Another perilous business was the disinfection of books when households were reported for smallpox or other deadly diseases. Crestadoro would immediately inform the Council of any such outbreak, and they always took rapid action. Waterspouts overflowed, pipes cracked in the frost, flagstones sunk, and equipment vanished. In the winter months Crestadoro was inundated with such crises.

Under no circumstances would Crestadoro and his staff tolerate losses, however trivial. W. G. Wharton and J. Burns, Joiners and Plasterers reply with some irritation to Crestadoro's pursuit of a bucket on 19 July 1873:

> We have made Several enquiries respecting the Missing Bucket. Our men know nothing about it and assert it never left the Library by their Aid but still if you are confident it did (and we have no reason to disbelieve your word) we are willing to save your future Annoyance to Pay for the Bucket you have lost. Please state price.

### 'There are many out of Situations to whom a Warm Room and Books are advantages'[434]

Illustrations of the Campfield interior show a splendid room in the high Victorian style.

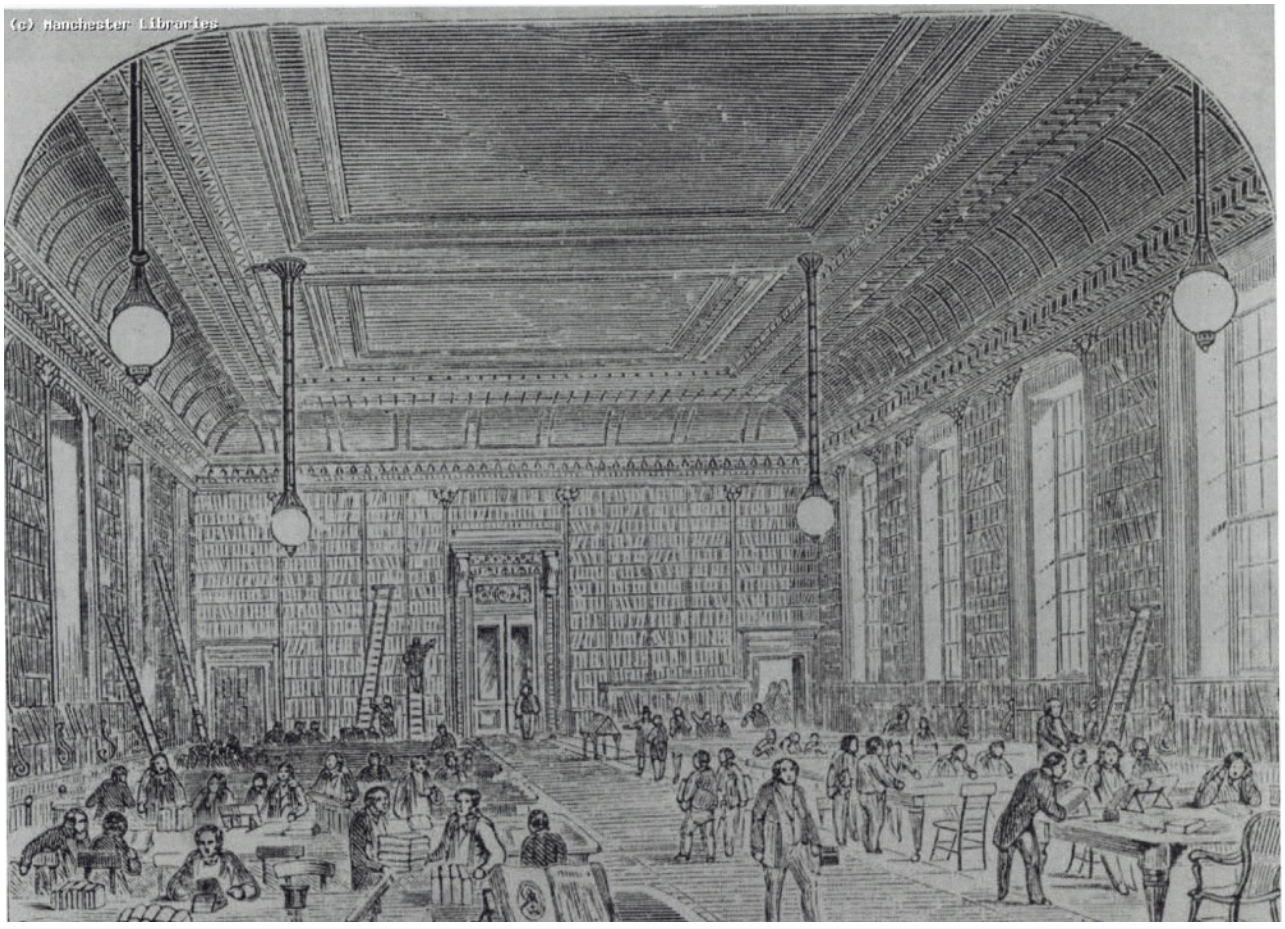


Fig.31 Campfield Library Interior

However, the atmosphere, temperature, space and facilities were not ideal. Crestadoro and his staff were engaged in marathon struggles to keep Campfield and the branch libraries, warm, clean and well lit. Gas, coal, hydrocarbon, oil and bad fumes were the daily business of these librarians.

Campfield and the branches were heated by various systems of hot water pipes, warm air pipes, stoves and open fires. Many firms were producing hot-water boilers in the 1860s with radiators arriving on the scene in the 1880s. The placing of the pipes near or under shelving was a fire hazard as well as harmful to books but the limitations of space meant some risk had to be taken.

Many people naturally sought out warmth in the libraries. As Mr. Mitchell wrote from Ancoats Branch in November 1864, guards were needed for the fireplaces as: 'the fires are invaded by parties who have no consideration for others'.

All this heating apparatus created pollution, dust, and dangerous debris. An inspection of Campfield

in 1869 or 1870 by Councillor Smith identified the need for cleaning out a 'kind of pillar full of steam or warm air pipes' which was 'full of all kinds of dust and … accumulating for years'.[435]

J. Williams again wrote in feelingly of his experiences at Campfield:

> Saturday last being wet, Cold and damp, I went as usual in the afternoon but the gas had only just been lighted and not had sufficient time to take effect. I placed my hands on the Pipes for heating and found them quite Cold, and after sitting a while I was obliged to leave, being starved out – the convenience of those moving about in the institution seems more to be attended to than the Readers who coming to sit still require some warmth.
>
> I have seen some during the late severe weather crouching over the Pipes and again I have been there at times when the weather has been blustery and anything but warm and the windows in the News Room have been open both top and bottom, the wind blowing directly on the stands.[436]

The branch librarians had to consult the Chief Librarian for apparently trivial matters of cleaning and maintenance of the heating apparatus. All orders had to be approved, for example, Chadwick at Hulme in March 1865 submits his list of: 'blackhead brush, scrubbing brush, soap, soda, blacklead, scouring flannel, coal'. Nothing was trivial, however, under the strict system of command of the Free Library Committee and the need to tightly control the limited budgets.

Disputes with charwomen, arguments over who should clean and light the furnaces all had to be resolved by Crestadoro. Given how much time he spent on heating problems, it is no wonder his thoughts turned to efficient consumption of fuel in his patent on fire-grates in 1873, or to his famous 'library poker' relegated after sixty years to the last branch to burn coal.

## Lights and fumes

Accounts of both the BM and the Manchester Free Libraries show the same frustrations in providing adequate light for the readers. Those murky polluted evenings outside must have been echoed by the fogs and fumes of the reading rooms.

Gas was manufactured commercially in the 1820s, but gas lighting made slow progress as it was rightly perceived as risky. The quality of the supply improved, a key factor, as Crestadoro would have known well in the viability of hot-air balloons. Gas lighting in the new Houses of Parliament prompted its spread in the 1860s.

Oil lamps also improved dramatically with Aime Argand's inventions in 1780, but only a thick oil was available, colza, which had to be pushed in various ways to the wick. The discovery of kerosene, or paraffin, transformed the situation. Paraffin is a combustible hydrocarbon liquid, distilled from sources of coal and seep-oil and it became widely used in the 1850s, but it had its risks, especially when suppliers mixed in cheaper ingredients.

Electric lighting made its appearance in libraries at the end of Crestadoro's life. The Sunderland inventor of the electric light bulb, Sir Joseph Swan, demonstrated a working lamp in February 1879 at the lecture theatre of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne and in 1880 their library was lit by electricity. In 1879 there were thrilling reports of the new arc lighting in the British Museum Reading Room. *The Times* described how: 'the spacious room was suddenly illuminated as by a magic ray of sunshine to the great satisfaction of all present'.[437]

It is quite hard to work out exactly what heating and lighting was installed at Campfield and the branches at various times. There are gaps in the letters, and the references to apparatus can apply to

both heating and lighting.

Altogether the Minutes, Letter Books and reports reveal a troubled history which was really only solved by the advent of electricity towards the end of the century. The Free Libraries started in a period of rapid technical change, but with a high degree of trial and error to be endured. Lighting was no exception.

Manchester Free Libraries had gas lighting, but without the mantles (invented in 1885) the open flames were shielded by various reflector methods and, because of the heat, directed upwards. As well as the poor quality of the light, both oil and gas produced overwhelming fumes. The reader J. Williams, contacted the Committee on 24 August 1866 to complain of the 'want of ventilation' at Hulme: 'This is bad enough in the day times but when the gas (which burns high above the heads of the readers) is lighted in the evening the atmosphere of the room becomes so activated & the heat so great, as positively to drive from the library those who would otherwise gladly stay there.'

He suggested a remedy of replacing some window panels with perforated zinc or glass: 'This would keep the room always sweet: there would be no draughts. Only the perforated frames must exactly face each other in the opposed side walls.'

There was a fast response to this particular complaint of Hulme's prestigious new building. Tenders for ventilation work, four airshafts and casement hinges for windows, were sent to the Committee soon after this letter.

Making adjustments to combat the problems often resulted in different ones. The first purpose built library, the Rochdale Road Branch, was not exempt from lighting problems. The Minutes for 25 August 1869 record a resolution for Rochdale Road: 'That a wire guard be put over the gas lamp in the Hall to prevent the people from lighting their pipes thereat; and that the gas-burners in the Library be replaced by Urquhart's patent Gas Jets.'

Crestadoro's technical knowledge and his love of detail made him formidable in monitoring the quality of the service. His thoroughness in checking resulted in a report recorded in the Minutes for 24 June 1874. He had identified discrepancies of gas at the branches and it turned out that the meters for the Rochdale Road Branch and the Chorlton and Ardwick Branch were faulty.

## The Hydrocarbon Saga

In 1871 the Committee, primarily Thomas Baker, took the decision to replace gas with hydrocarbon lamps at Campfield and the Rochdale Road Branch. The raft of ensuing problems that Crestadoro then had to deal with drove them to reverse this decision in late 1873.

The story starts with a handwritten letter in early 1871 from the 'City Gas Chandelier and Furnishing Ironmongery Establishment, Showrooms, 15 Piccadilly, opposite the Peel Monument, Agents for the Hydro-Carbon Light Co - Rigby & Sons.'

The writer explains he has been prompted to contact Crestadoro by the Vice President of the Athenaeum. He refers to the recent annual report of the Manchester Free Libraries and the part that deals with the expense of cleaning several rooms: 'in consequence of the dirt created by Gas', and brings to Crestadoro's attention 'the Patent Hydro-Carbon Gas light'. He recommends it as much cleaner and brighter, as well as providing the savings that he calculates can be made.

The Minutes of 19 December 1871 record that: 'A letter was read from Mssrs J Rigby & Sons of 15 Piccadilly proposing to substitute their Hydrocarbon Gas Lights in place of the gas arrangements at present in use in the Libraries. Mr. Turner was requested to ascertain how the Hydrocarbon Lights

worked which had been put up in the Athenaeum and report.'

The Minutes of 22 February 1871 record that the Chair and Mr. Turner met with Mr. Rigby and gave orders for: 'the new lights to be put up in the Reference Library'.

The Committee's speedy action speaks volumes of their exasperation with the problems of the old gas lighting. It was bold to make such a change as hydrocarbon lighting was still in its first decades with known risks. The fact that the Athenaeum was happy with the system must have been a weighty factor. It appears that hydrocarbon lighting was installed in both the Reference and Lending Libraries at Campfield and in the Rochdale Road Branch.

At the start all seems well. Crestadoro's report at the 29 March 1871 meeting was: 'that the change was in every respect very satisfactory.' At the next meeting on 26 April 1871, he reported that the gas bills were lower with the new lights, £5.1.3 for the half-quarter.

The honeymoon period was soon over and Crestadoro was plunged into endless disputes with Rigby & Sons. The new system is simply referred to as gas, which can be confusing in trying to understand what is going on: 'There is an escape of gas here. I have sent once before about it, but the man who came went away without doing anything to remedy it. I should be obliged if you would attend to it at once.' (13 November 1871)

A month later (11 Dec 1871) Crestadoro was demanding better action from Rigby & Sons. Mr. Mills had contacted Crestadoro earlier on the same day with the problems of the Rochdale Road Branch, experienced on the Saturday evening. He explains that: 'Rigby's men came on Thursday morning and they were here again this morning but during this dark and cold weather we had sometimes to burn gas all day and in consequence it wants attending to more frequently.' Crestadoro acts immediately on behalf of Mr. Mills.

His address of 'Gent.' and the short 'Yours truly A Crestadoro' are curter than is usual in his letters, sounding a note of exasperation:

> Gent. The Librarian and many of the readers at the Rochdale Rd Branch library have complained of the bad light given by the gas there, and Saturday evening last one Gentleman found it impossible to read at the stand & would insist on taking the newspaper off the stand into the middle of the room. As it is necessary that we have sufficient light I should be obliged if you would attend to the matter and see that your men attend to the apparatus more frequently during this dark weather than they have done, as we are obliged to keep the gas on all day, Yours truly A Crestadoro.

The next letter that has been preserved, dated 13 December 1871, deals again with the lighting at Campfield. It looks as if Crestadoro has lost patience with Messrs. J. Rigby & Sons and his style is less considered than usual:

> In reply to your note of yesterday I beg to state that your finding does not agree with my finding. My Assistants had to wipe off from two tables and one chair spilt oil. I myself saw with my own eyes two large splashes on one table and several smaller ones on a chair. These must be in addition to the 'very little drop on one table' which you say your men wiped off. You say nothing about the offensive smell we have more or less every evening. Last night it was most offensive. The ventilation seems not to act and the reflectors are as black as chimneys. As I write on lighting the gas in the Newsroom one of the Pendants is in flame owing to some joint out of order. This has occurred before. I am obliged to put the light out and order our Porter to see if he can stop the leakage with some putty. If this

> nuisance continues I am afraid I shall have to recommend the Comt. to give up the oil and return to the old plan.

Matters did not improve as Crestadoro contacted Rigby again on 8 January 1872: 'I beg to inform you that on Friday evening, the 5th inst, at 5.30 o'clock a disagreeable smell, proceeding from the gas, was so prevalent in the Reference Library room as to necessitate the opening of the windows. Three of the reflectors were also completely blackened with smoke.'

Problems persisted at the Rochdale Road Branch; the lights were bad again on 2 January 1872. Mr. Councillor Worthington called twice and complained about the gas, and to add to all this there were cracks in the walls, damp and mouldy books.

In the next letter of 11 January 1872, Crestadoro threatened a return to the old (gas) system. It is evident from this letter that Crestadoro was referring to the gas fumes that can be produced from the lamps. Here is the voice of Crestadoro the inventor to whom gas, steam, heat and movements of air are familiar spirits:

> I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your reply to my letter of the 8th ins. And to point out that my note simply stated as fact. That fact is not altered by your stating that you do not 'understand the repeated complaints' nor by your 'explanation' that it is 'no fault of the HydroCarbon process' but a true indication of the want of air'. I submit that it is for you to see that the air does not 'come back by the ventilation tubes and bring with it the unburnt Gas and vapour' which cause so offensive a smell and cannot absolutely be tolerated as it is very injurious to the health and to the books. If this be not possible it is evident that the Hydro Carbon process fails to fulfill the terms of your contract and must be considered unsuitable for our library. I shall entertain the hope that such is not the case and that you will be able effectively to prevent the reoccurrence of the nuisance.

The Archives for March 1872 are packed with the troubles of the Rochdale Road Branch and Rigby's unsatisfactory conduct. The worst happened to Mills on 8 March 1872 when: 'one of the oil holders over the gas lights in the Newsroom boiled over and before I could prevent it, covered the tables, papers, magazines etc. with hot oil, the gas fumes got choked up with the sediments and then the gas went out leaving one end of the Newsroom in darkness.'

Mills wrote to Crestadoro on 8 March 1872 that he suspected Rigby's were overcharging and the men not attending for the time they are paid for. Crestadoro and his staff zealously scrutinized the Rigby activities. On 8 March 1872, Mills reported to Crestadoro on his dispute with Rigby's clerk who admits overcharging but still maintains the attendance hours were correct: 'This I cannot dispute; the charwoman says the men came once or twice before 8 am but cannot remember the dates. I have again referred to my diary for December 26 and find an entry.'

It also appears that Crestadoro has been filling gas lamps himself to disprove the claims.

> 39/33 March 1872 Draft Report –
>
> "Hydro-Carbon Lights at Livesey St Library.
>
> Mr. Crestadoro begs to report that he has received from Rigby & Son the accompanying bill for attendance to the gas lights of the Livesey Street Library. He finds that the time required to fill each of the oil holders is about ten minutes or certainly not more than an hour for the four lights while Rigby and Son charge for five hours. They say the charge includes the time occupied by their men in going from and returning to their shop so that more than four hours would appear to be taken up in the walk. He also finds from a careful

> record kept by Mr Mills that on the 26th December only one attended but two men's time charged for. Messrs Rigby and Son admit that in that respect they have to trust to their workmen's reports. Both the porter and the Assistant who has looked after the light say that not more than one pint of oil is necessary in filling each holder, making four pints in all yet Rigby & Son charge for double that quantity, viz – one Gallon."

Despite all this the firm was obviously very active in its promotion as their advertisement in the Manchester Times, Saturday 4 May 1872 indicates:

> JOHN RIGBY & SON
>
> FURNISHING IRONMONGERS AND GAS FITTERS.
>
> Extensive Stock of FENDERS, FIRE IRONS, GASCHANDELIERS & FITTINGS.
>
> Wholesale and Retail.
>
> GAS REDUCED TO ONE-THIRD ITS PRESENT COST.
>
> By the Hydro-carbon Process.
>
> PROSPECTUSES ON APPLICATION.
>
> See New Reform Club, Athenaeum, Mechanics' Institution, Free Libraries, Campfield and Livesey-street, Cheetham Town Hall.
>
> Over 500 now Fixed.
>
> Experienced Workman Sent to any part of the Country 15 PICCADILLY (TWO DOORS FROM OLDHAM.STREET). MANCHESTER.

## Disaster

Then disaster struck. In the early morning of Wednesday, 24 September 1873, fire broke out in the Manchester Athenaeum, destroying the library, newsroom and gymnasium.[438] There were massive gas explosions from the meter and pipes and the cause was later identified as the large ceiling sunlight where the flues had become blocked, leading to overheating. Despite this the Athenaeum retained trust in Rigby and Son. They were employed to install a new and safer system in the reconstructed building.

The Free Library Committee promptly held a Special Meeting on 29 September 1873 to assess the fire risk for their buildings, as they had the same system as the Athenaeum. The City Surveyor pronounced that the ventilating pipes were too close to the 'desiccated' and 'highly inflammable' timbers of the Reference Library. Furthermore the gas construction of the lighting was dangerous in both Campfield Reference and Lending Libraries. The best plan would be: 'to get rid of the system of hydro-carbon burners and replace them with ordinary burners at a much greater distance from the ceiling.' There was also mention of the staircase being unsafe, which is interesting in light of a later accident.

The Manchester Assurance company which covered Campfield, recommended the dangerous construction of the sunlights to be made safer by being enclosed in earthenware (Minutes, 13 October 1873)*: '*Sunlights however well constructed are a source of danger, and are very objectionable features in a Risk.'

Crestadoro's fraught relationship with Messrs Rigby & Sons continued. On 24 October 1873 he delivered an ultimatum:

> This repeated inattention, as well as the complaints which I have received of the impertinence of your men towards the persons in charge of the room, compels me to give you notice that I cannot allow the readers to be inconvenienced nor can I undertake to send to you any longer, but that if in future our lights are out of order I will call in someone else to do the work at your cost.

Crestadoro badgered the Committee, as reported in the Minutes of 17 November 1873. He reiterating the issue of Rigby & Sons' constant and futile visits to sort out the Hydro Carbon Gas Lights: 'burners being stopped up with condensed oil'. This is interesting as hydrocarbon was supposedly a real improvement on the old colza oil: perhaps the oil provided by Rigby & Sons was not sufficiently refined.

The outcome was that at this meeting the resolution was taken: 'That the old system of lighting be adopted in both Libraries at Campfield and also at Rochdale Road.'

On 29 November 1875, Crestadoro responded to a list of questions from the Librarian at the Guildhall Library, London by sending him a copy of the annual report as well as by comments on the individual points.

Crestadoro replied to Question 3 on lighting as follows: 'All our Libraries are lighted by gas. No lamps are used. They are all well ventilated except one and our experience points to the conclusion that if a proper renewal of air is given no damage worth consideration need be apprehended.'

## Sunlights

The problems that had driven the change in the first place had not gone away. In 1875 the Minutes of the Sub Committee for Campfield highlight the fire risks, the 'dangerous construction' of the eight sunlights in the Newsroom, suspended from the ceiling with pipes to take away the heat and fumes. The problems of lighting in the Reference Library reach crisis point: 'The light continues to be very unsatisfactory and uncertain. Several complaints were made by various Readers and on the evening of the 18th, one of them, Mr Webb, left the Reading Room of the Reference Library saying he could not see to read.'

Rigby & Sons may have been the best of the bunch. There was much concern at the unreliable work of the plumbers who turned themselves into untrained gas fitters and later electricians, bringing their terminology of water supply into the new industries. As early as 1812 Humphry Repton had fulminated against the Argand light suppliers: 'I believe 'em all rogues alike and only differing in the more or less'[439]

In trying to untangle all these complexities of lighting, I was puzzled by sunlights or sunburners, and how they worked with gas or hydrocarbon. I came across the website, *williamsugghistory.co.uk*, created by Charles Suggs, great grandson of the heating and lighting manufacturer, William Suggs. Charles Suggs responded helpfully to my queries with the verdict:

> In conclusion it may well be that John Rigby & Son were trying to emulate the enrichment of coal gas with their own system using something other than naphthalene which resulted in incomplete vaporisation with some of the liquid dripping onto the desks below.

Crestadoro was right to distrust them.

## Interiors and exteriors

The Committee Minutes and the Letter Books are full of tradesmen's specifications and estimates,

often written in beautiful handwriting on good quality heavy paper, outlining costs for all sorts of painting, plastering, structural work. All these came Crestadoro's way though the Free Library Committee, and the City Surveyor would also be involved in awarding of contracts. Both Crestadoro and the Committee had to pick up the complaints, extending to the outside as well as the inside of buildings, and covering both Campfield and the branches.

Clock repair and maintenance (six clocks at least at Campfield), pictures, security, all were within Crestadoro's remit. Odd details spring out from the routine paperwork. An estimate of £18 and eleven shillings was accepted (7 September 1866) for umbrella stands, cupboards etc. from a Builder & Mediaeval Woodworker of Wright Street, Greenhays, striking a nice Manchester note of the Pugin Gothic revival. The Minutes for 25 May 1864 interestingly record the decorator at Campfield, covering papering and paint work, is a Mary Chadfield.

A random selection from the many examples in The Letter Books reflects the variety of issues Crestadoro dealt with on a daily basis.

In 1866, the Clerk of Works specifies on two pages of lined blue paper the painting work contracted for Campfield in 1866 in a period of closure, 30 May to 12 June. Everything is to be stripped, cleaned and washed, two coats of paint are to be given to the ceiling, flowers, pendants and relieved with colours as before and all bookcases are to be cleaned. In 1871, the firm Burns is contracted for £64 for the outside repair of Campfield, taking the perished or decayed cement back to the bare bricks, making good with 'Hull' or 'Portland Cement', giving the new surface four coats of linseed oil and white lead, two coats for the rest in an approved colour and the front door to be grained oak and varnished.

Crestadoro directed the painters at Hulme Library (May or June 1873*)*: 'You will please commence the work at the time stated viz June 9 and finish within 8 or 9 days.'

In Crestadoro's dealings we see the sharply organised man who had produced the Manchester catalogue exactly to contract, and has similar expectations of others. Unless provoked, as in the case of Rigby & Sons, Crestadoro is courteous in tone and explains his reasons, as in this initial letter on the painting at Livesey Street, dated 5 September, 1877:

> I have to inform you that your tender for painting the Livesey Street Branch library as per specifications for the sum of £53.00 is accepted. We shall be ready for you to begin work on the date proposed by yourself, Monday 17 Sept, and I shall be obliged if you will inform me by what date you will finish. It is requisite that the Library should be closed as few days as possible, and I must know beforehand in order that the date of reopening may be announced.

The painter, Mr. Chester, comes back with a three-week offer, which is unacceptable to the Committee Chairman so more negotiations ensue.

## Pictures, Busts and Memorials

Even the pictures were everyday concerns. Chadwick, the Hulme Branch Librarian, reports to Crestadoro that the cords are rotten on the pictures in the Newspaper Room: 'it is three years + since they were hung.' Crestadoro inherited the case of a donor who was enraged that his memorial offering of Sir James Potter has vanished. The letter is difficult to decipher but the main point of interest is the discourtesy of Smiles and presumably the satisfactory response from Crestadoro for no more is heard of the affair:

> In August 1859, the Free Libraries Committee did me the honour to accept a… of my new Style of Ornamental (blue and gold) in a Eulogy of Sir James Potter, the founder of the Free Library…. I observed it hung then alongside the Waterloo Banquet. I saw Mr Smiles and asked him if Mr Dorynell had left any order with respecting the hanging of it. He treated me most cavalierly, saying 'Do you object to where it is hung?' - I replied that had it been placed near the Campfield Mirror it would be better – 'Indeed" - said he "I shall not remove it - not even if W…himself… Soon after this, the whole of the works were taken down for a cleaning - my little offering was not hung at all.

Sir John Potter continued to haunt. Crestadoro had to arrange for the painting of four plaster busts as recorded in the Minutes for 30 May 1866.

The top room at Campfield was referred to as the Museum Room, and under the Library Act there was a remit for setting up a museum there, but gradually the pressing need for space meant this became storage space until the weight could not be supported in the crumbling building. Initially, machine models were a popular display. Curious objects drifted there, amongst them the Mechanics' Institution's collection from 'the occult art of phrenology in Manchester'. These 760 phrenology busts of: 'statesmen, poets, lawyers, murderers, and other celebrated gentlemen of the past and of the generation then present',[440] were removed from Campfield to the Queen's Park Museum in March 1863. Their ultimate fate is unknown.

There are several frustrating references in the Library Archives to items no longer traceable in Manchester, including a copy of George Cruikshank's vast painting *The worship of Bacchus*, portraits and photographs of councillors, officials, and eminent citizens. Manchester Libraries do not seem to have preserved these, and even a bust of Sutton, is apparently now broken and lies in the basement.

## Branches

Most of the direct information on the establishment of new branches is in the Minutes, relayed through the Sub Committee reports, tenders and consideration of various options.

There is also information in the Letter Books, with tender letters, reports from contractors and subsequent maintenance issues. Crestadoro was active in all this routine business and readily supplied information to enquiries. For example, he replies on 7 November 1871, to a J.W. Whitley Esq. of 26 Little Park Street, Coventry that:

> I should say the size of a public newsroom ought to be proportionate to the population. In Manchester we have six public reading rooms and there will shortly be a seventh opened. Their average size is 48ft x 43ft. The building of the Rusholme Road library was formerly a school-house. The expensive alterations and additions for our purposes cost about £2400. The cost of the Hulme Branch library Building was about £4000.

Crestadoro spoke proudly of the Committee's policy of taking the books to the people and of the beneficial spread of the Branches. This was the situation as he described it on 30 April 1877:

> The Free Libraries have from the day of opening been managed by the Corporation under the Free Libraries Acts, and the advantages of the Institution have been gradually extended to the various districts of the City. The Branches which at first were started in small premises, are now housed in handsome and spacious buildings. The following are their names and dates of opening: Hulme 23 Nov 1857, Ancoats 7 Dec 1857, Rochdale Road 4 June 1860; Chorlton 6 Oct 1866; Cheetham 29 Jan 1872.

> For the last named branch a new building from the designs of Mssrs Barken and Ellis is about to be opened on the Cheetham Hill Road.

Sutton appears to take over many of Crestadoro's estate activities in the last couple of years of his life. Sutton wrote to Alderman Baker's Office on 22 January 1878 of the unsatisfactory progress at Cheetham: the urgency and exasperation are familiar echoes of many such letters from Crestadoro. However, there is a hard ruthlessness about Sutton's complaint about the Clerk of Works, and a peremptory note in his demands that is not usually found in Crestadoro's letters. Not surprisingly, Sutton seems to have acted as Baker's spy and went on to be the real empire-builder of Manchester Libraries:

> I am required by Mr Alderman Baker to desire you to still urge on the work in Cheetham, and to get everything finished there. I was up there this morning and found only two of Thompson' men at work, and the Clerk of Works only just arriving for the first time (11.30).
>
> He appears to me to be without any push and to have not the slightest desire to carry out your and our wishes for more speed. I am afraid you will have to send in some more men to finish, independently of Thompsons,

Naturally, Crestadoro attended the opening ceremonies of the branches but there is little sense of pushing himself forward. It fell to him to report on such events and he fulfilled the task with his usual care. He double-checked with a Councillor Croston on 26 May 1876 (Letter 584):

> As I shall have to make a report of the proceedings at the laying of the corner stone of the Cheetham Branch library it is most important that it should be as full and accurate as possible, May I therefore ask if you will be good enough to look over the accompanying extract from the 'City News' and to favour me with such corrections and additions to it as will make it complete and satisfactory.

## Campfield Disturbances

As well as Campfield being too distant for most of its readers, the site itself was insalubrious. There were endless rows and disturbances in the narrow passageway and the police officer, Captain Palin, was consulted frequently to see if this could be controlled. Following Sutton's report on problems in March 30 1870, Thomas Baker himself meet with Captain Palin.

The worst times for the Library were around the traditional Campfield markets and fairs, especially the annual Easter fair. The Minutes for 11 February1853 record the porter being sworn in as a Constable 'to enable him to act in case of need' as well as a police officer being on duty each night of the Easter week with the library closing daily at 2pm. The situation became untenable over the years, and this is what made Crestadoro suddenly burst into impassioned complaints.

Occasionally, Crestadoro took the Committee by surprise with passionate reports on issues where he has clearly reached the end of his patience. The fairs around Campfield, the crowds, noise, chaos and danger that meant the Library had to close, drove him to particular despair as is recorded in the Minutes for 26 February 1868:

> Mr Crestadoro begs leave to call the attention of the Committee to the increasing nuisance of the fairs which are held in front of the Reference Library. In addition to the 'Rag Fair' which is held every Monday there are the annual and occasional Fairs which have now increased within a short period from two to five – one of them being the celebrated 'Dirt

> Fair' lately banished from Salford and another, being one never held before, and now going on for the first time. During their continuance the noise is very great, and the access to the Library is much impeded. At such times many persons who come into the news-room give a great deal of trouble by standing to look through the windows. The afternoon of Monday last was gloomy and dark and the annoyance caused by loungers was such that Mr Radford had to light the gas and shut the shutters in order to obviate the difficulty. At this some persons grumbled and said that a complaint to the newspapers should be sent.

Someone, perhaps a member if staff, sketched the fair from the roof of Campfield.

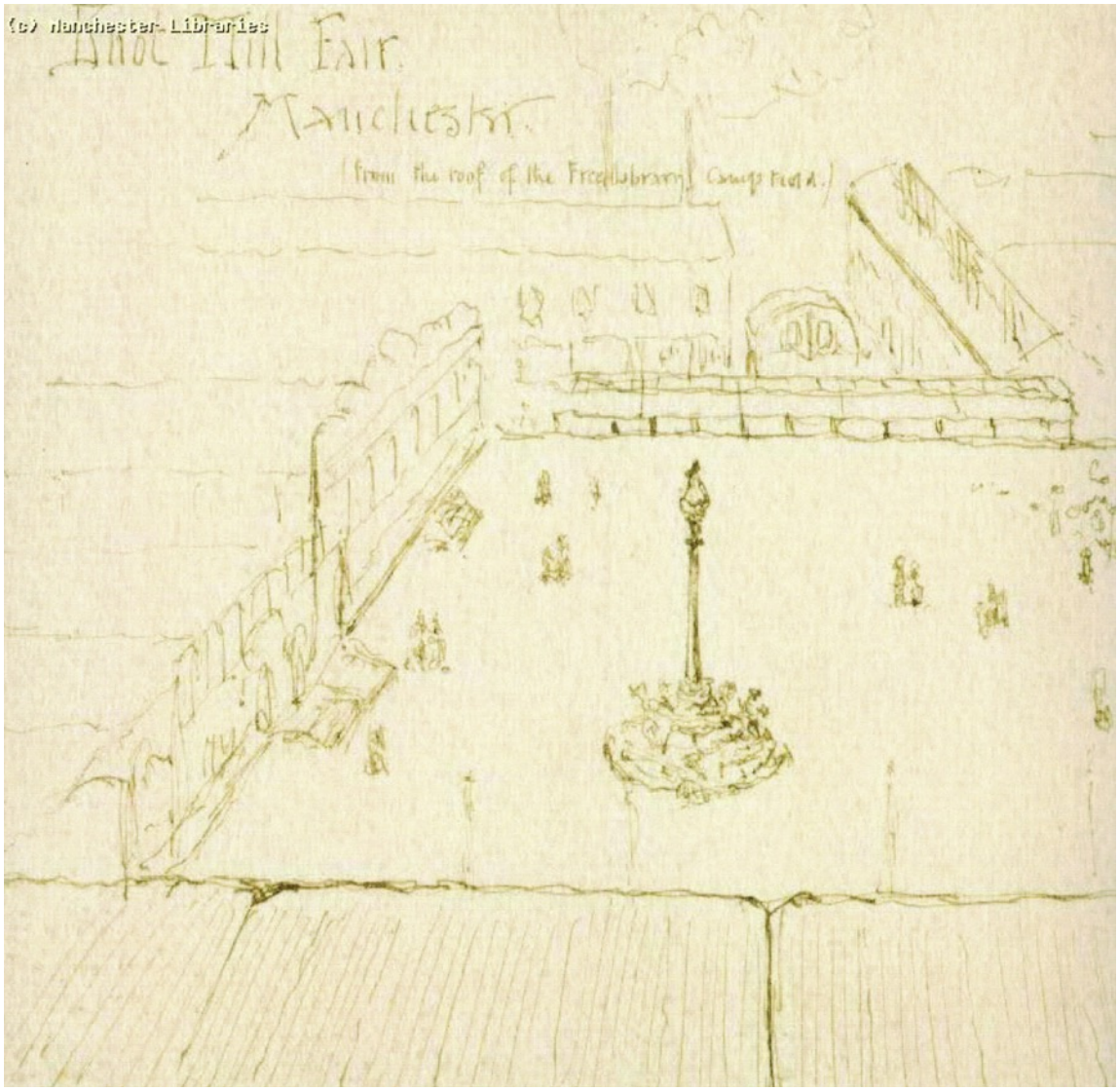


Fig.32 Campfield Library View of Fair

Although Crestadoro's complaints were referred to the Market Committee and additional security given by the police, there was no real immediate solution. The next year on 29 April 1868 Crestadoro again expressed his anger, especially as the Library had nearly been set on fire during the Fair. This was passed to the Market Committee who again gave a token response. Crestadoro complained again on 22 May 1868 of broken windows and the need for more closures at the Library as the Whit Week fair had extended from four days to a whole week.

## Alternatives for Campfield

The Committee did not conceal the problems of Campfield. The annual reports are open about its unsuitability, and detail the strategy of creating a network of branch libraries, ideally purpose built. It was apparent that there was no long-term solution for the crumbling building itself or for its unfortunate location. There was continual effort over the years, to find alternatives for Campfield. The New Town Hall designed by Alfred Waterhouse gave Thomas Baker the options of seeking accommodation at either the Old or New Town Hall.

Meanwhile the problems at Campfield also continued to plague Crestadoro. On 30 August 1871, the City Surveyor reported that the wood was rotten, that plasterwork and decoration needed renovation, and, worst of all, that the external walls were dangerous, now being held together by bolts.

Overcrowded, ill lit, poorly ventilated, the effort to keep the Campfield library rooms fit for purpose must have been considerable. The structural problems of cracks and bulges in the walls and uncertain flooring meant collections could not be housed in some areas. Accommodation was desperately needed for the growing collections and bookcases were even placed against windows.

A Reference Library Sub Committee was set up on 26 February 1873, and a month later directed Mr. Leigh to produce a structural report. At this meeting on 26 March 1873 it was also resolved that any unexpected balance of funds should be put into the aptly named ‘Sinking Fund’. A long, printed report was produced on 30 April 1873, unnamed but certainly written by Crestadoro, given the characteristic practical detail and emphasis on fairs:

> Want of room and the insecurity of the building are felt to be insurmountable obstacles to any material increase to the library. But if such increased accommodation were practicable the contiguity of the fair-ground is so great an objection as to make any long continuance at Campfield most undesirable.

The report continues with objections to the scheme of moving to the New Town Hall third floor. There were 120 steps for borrowers to mount and the shelving along corridors would be too high and a nightmare for the assistants. Nor could books be sent there for cataloguing. In making this objection Crestadoro gives us a glimpse of the centralised cataloguing process, a very modern approach though representing an enormous amount of work for the Chief Librarian:

> Another objection arises from the circumstances that the books purchased for the Branch libraries are sent to the office of the Chief Librarian who has to enter them in the register, to examine, apportion, stamp and catalogue them, and then distribute them to the Branches for which they are respectively intended.

By 13 December 1873, the City Surveyors are called in following a: ‘report from the Chief Librarian that a large piece of plaster had fallen from one of the balconies outside the Free Library at Campfield.’ The City Surveyors found the gable cracked, bricks and mortar to be in a very bad condition, and decreed that the top room had to be emptied. They warned that if the bulge grew more than another two inches the building would fall.

## 1874 Crisis

1874 was not a good year for Crestadoro. Axon, his right hand man at Campfield, unexpectedly resigned on 28 January, and the unsafe condition of Campfield reached breaking point in March.

Concerns for the safety of the building continued to be voiced some time before the actual

abandonment in 1877. There is a letter from Thomas Baker on 7 March 1874 warning that: 'the wall of the Reference Library in Campfield was still bulging out and that the next move would be a collapse….Mr Lynde says distinctly that the building will not last long.'

As one of the measures taken to prop up Campfield, books were removed from the Top Room (the Parliamentary Papers had already gone), and the Minutes of 24 February 1875 note Crestadoro's long report on the consequences of this farming out: 'Inconvenience and Annoyance by Reference Library Books being at Chorlton etc Libraries'.

However, Crestadoro's optimism surfaced in the 1875 to 1876 annual report: only Crestadoro could have written in relation to the problems of the reference collections: 'the tide of usefulness, which would appear to have been temporarily checked, will again flow on.'

The crisis had impact on the neighbouring properties. Mr. Lynde urgently consulted architects, and four cottages next to Campfield had to be purchased as they were at risk from the collapse of Campfield. In the quaint phrase that is used by the Council in dealing over land and property: 'the Corporate Seal was placed on four cottages.'

Despite all this a programme of 'cleaning and beautifying' was still in place for the doomed Campfield Library, according to the Minutes of 25 February 1874. Crestadoro also had problems at Ancoats and asked the City Surveyor to inspect there. It was decided the floor would not bear the weight required without props of iron columns: the Committee authorised this on 25 March 1874.

From March onwards the Minutes report John James Sutton being too ill to cover his duties as Librarian at Cheetham, and Crestadoro had to deal with his absence and ensure coverage. Sadly, at the June 24 1874 meeting Crestadoro's report was read: 'Mr Crestadoro reported the death since the last meeting of Mr John James Sutton the Librarian of the Cheetham Branch.' This was Charles Sutton's brother; both had been assistants in the library service and earned promotion.

## The End of Campfield

Manchester celebrated the centenary of its libraries in 1952. The *Manchester Guardian* (3 September 1952) commented with light humour on the: 'first building at Campfield which, in 1877, gave way beneath the weight of books – had ever library a more glorious end?'

The reality was in fact traumatic. For Crestadoro and his staff who had struggled valiantly to maintain the Campfield Building it was a terrible time, and to have the reference and lending collections inaccessible after all those proud years of provision a real humiliation. A further bitterness for the Committee and library officials was that they had not sat back oblivious to the likelihood of collapse, but had campaigned fervently for new premises.

Despite all the efforts, including repeated consideration of the New Town Hall, no suitable site for the Reference Library had been found by the time disaster struck.

Evidence of the imminent collapse of Campfield emerged on 9 March 1877. The City Surveyor informed the Committee it was safer to pull the building down but if not uprights would have to be used to try to secure the walls. It was resolved unanimously that Campfield had to be closed forthwith, the reference books sent to the Old Town Hall and notices to this effect sent out.

## Exit

The evacuation started. Staff began moving the remaining books to the Old Town Hall on 14 March 1877. The Minutes of 21 March record that 'a sum not exceeding £20' was to be divided between them.

The disastrous news appeared in the local press – the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* reported as follows on Saturday, 24 March 1877:

> The condition of Campfield Library during the past few days has become so dangerous, that for safety the Free Libraries Committee have deemed it advisable to erect a hoarding round the building in Tonman-street and Byrom-street, and to remove the books to the reference department the old Town Hall. The inward bulge the wall of the library in Tonman-street has increased, and it is feared that the building may fall.

Finally the official end came when The Chief Surveyor declared Campfield was too dangerous on 25 March 1877.

Once Campfield was evacuated, the Out Letters for 1877 show much of the interior was sold off, for example, the black marble mantelpiece and the gas fittings, whilst other mantelpieces were removed for shelving. Edward Rogerson & Co., Hot Water and Gas Engineers, Ironmongery Warehouse, Kitchen Range, Mantel Piece and Grate Manufactory were not impressed by the prospect of recycling the old range (Letter 51/93):

> We have examined the Range now fixed at Campfield and find it is worthless as a range many parts being so burnt as to be unfit for any work, we could only allow for it as old metal. We could by altering the brickwork of the opening of the new Free Library in King Street fix a 3ft range there and this would cost including materials, Ranges & mantelpiece six pounds ten shillings; the fixing of the same would cost thirty shillings.

## The Old Town Hall

Many readers were made desperate by the loss of access to the collections. This was Crestadoro's response to an anxious enquirer on 9 April 1877:

> In reply to your inquiry I regret to say that I am unable to inform you as to the date of the re-opening of the Reference Library. The books are now stored at the Old Town Hall, King Street, but they are not available for reference, not can they be made so until the City Council have given an order as to the future site of the library.

The usual scholarly information could not be provided and there is understandable frustration in the tone of Crestadoro's letter of 11 April 1877. Crestadoro wrote to a William J. Thomas Esq., with whom he seems to be on good terms (Letter 769):

> I should have very real pleasure on referring to Lady Anne Hamilton's History but unfortunately it is at present out of my power to do so, our entire library now Had to be hastily removed to fresh quarter on account of the giving way of the building. I hope soon to be able to put my hand on the book, and shall then take care to answer your enquiry. I thank you for your kind offer of your pamphlet on Hannah Lightfoot. We have a copy in our Reference Library but we should be glad to have another to place in our Lending Department,

Crestadoro clearly knew his collections and how useful the printed catalogues must have proved in this stressful period. Admirably, he was not deterred from still building up the stock.

The officials at the Old Town Hall seem more humane than usual in their memos. A Mr Martin wrote to Sutton on 22 March 1877: 'I do not see any objection to your making yourselves as comfortable as possible during your temporary occupation of the Old Buildings.' In reply Sutton seems concerned to have his Chief well furnished: 'There is a carpet rolled up in your private

office. Will you please say if you are going to remove it or whether we may use it during Mr. Crestadoro's temporary occupation?'

It looks from this lanternslide of the Reference Library at the Old Town Hall, that the four plaster busts of Sir John Potter were safely installed.

Fig.33 Old Town Hall Interior

Crestadoro was on a long absence from July to August 1877, and Sutton was extremely busy as his deputy, chasing up painters in one branch to finish before Christmas, dealing with the problems of assistants, reader complaints and trying to get 'lent' reference books returned. The old building was still their responsibility. On 5 June 1877, Sutton wrote to John Gee, presumably a police official, to protect the empty Campfield: 'I am desired by Mr. Alderman Baker to inform you that a large number of windows in the Campfield Library have been willfully broken by stones, and to ask you to direct the particular attention of the officers on duty to the building.'

The alteration work to turn the Old Town Hall into the new Reference Library took nearly a year, deayed partially by a joiners' strike. The official opening was on 11 February 1878, immediately after the ceremony to open the new building for the Cheetham Branch.

The Reference Library remained in the Old Town Hall until 1912. This is a view of the Reference Library in 1891:

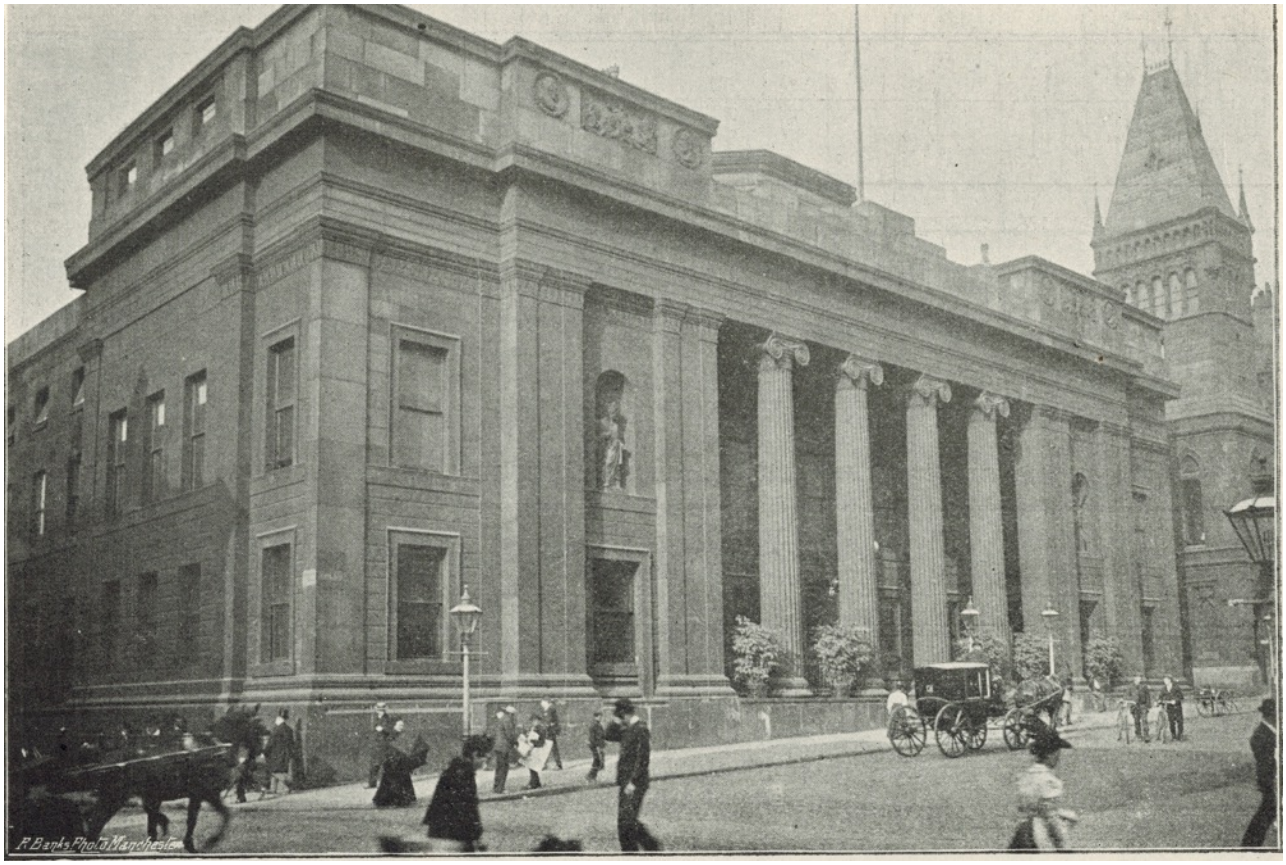

Fig.34 Old Town Hall Exterior

## Lending

Whilst the reference collection went to the Old Town Hall, the lending collection was stored and there was no idea at this stage of where the new library would be.

On 26 May 1879, shortly after Crestadoro's death, the Campfield Special Sub Committee recorded the purchase of a new site in Deansgate, which would allow construction of a lending branch:

> Resolved : that the Market Committee be informed that the space required by this Committee on the proposed site in Deansgate will be the whole of the first floor from Town St to Liverpool Road and from Deansgate to the line of the Market pillars with entrance space from Deansgate for a staircase to such floor, and with cellar space for heating apparatus and coal.

The Deansgate Branch opened in 1882, and the Campfield lending stock was again available. The library closed in 1934 but the splendid Victorian buildings still stand, now the Cervantes Institute, and a Tapas bar. The old Campfield site became the Market Hall and is now the Air and Space Museum with the strange double association of Crestadoro, the aeronautical inventor and Crestadoro the Chief Librarian. Both Robert Owen and Crestadoro would have appreciated the evolution of the site, surely one of Manchester's nodal points.

Ultimately, the Library Committee did very well out of the debacle. The Old Town Hall and the unoccupied land around it were transferred to the Library Committee in 1884, with the promise that

if sold the funds had to be used solely for library purposes. From the sale in 1911, and wise investment of funds by the City Treasurer, came the money: 'to build the present magnificent structure in St. Peter's Square'.[441] The façade, all that is left of Crestadoro's Reference Library, is now curiously preserved in Manchester's Heaton Park.

[427] David Sekers, *A Lady of Cotton Hannah Greg Mistress of Quarry Bank Mill* (Stroud: History, 2013) p.113

[428] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.155

[429] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.153

[430] MA, Out Letter 849

[431] UML, Papers of W.E.A. Axon, 729

[432] Thomas Greenwood, *Public Libraries : a History of the Movement and a Manual for the Organization and Management of Rate-supported Libraries, 4th ed.,revised and brought up to date* (London: Cassell, 1894) p.121

[433] Thomas Greenwood, *Public Libraries : a History of the Movement and a Manual for the Organization and Management of Rate-supported Libraries, 3rd ed., entirely re-written* (London : Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, & Co., 1890) p.59

[434] MA, In Letter 67/12

[435] MA, In Letter 69/70/81

[436] MA, In Letter 67/12

[437] *The Times,* 1879

[438] *Manchester Evening News,* (24 Sept 1873)

[439] Maureen Dillon, *Artificial Sunshine: a Social History of Domestic Lighting*, (London: National Trust, 2002) p. 106

[440] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.57

[441] Fry, 'The Manchester Public Libraries'

# Chapter Sixteen: Doctor Crestadoro's Dicta

> Crestadoro did much in his fifteen years of office to free the libraries from galling rules and regulations. 'What,' said he, and it was his most famous saying, 'is the use of a rule if it cannot be broken?' and many a student blessed his interpretation thereof.[442]

## A Marked and Beneficial Influence

Axon, in his *DNB*, entry summarised Crestadoro's significance as a librarian: 'Crestadoro exerted a marked and beneficial influence upon the progress of the free library movement'. This fits in with Crestadoro's well remembered dictum about breaking rules: as late as 1952 his liberal attitude was still being cited: 'During his term of office he tried to modify or remove restrictions and to extend the usefulness of libraries.'[443]

Sutton, Crestadoro's successor, forged Manchester into an empire of twenty-six libraries, with three million annual issues of books. I suspect that without Crestadoro's influence this dedicated man would have been of a stricter mould. Instead he was noted for his kindness, and for adhering to his old Chief's favourite dictum:

> In the light of Dr. Crestadoro's oft-quoted saying, 'What is the use of a rule if it cannot be broken?' he had no compunction about giving special facilities to any serious user of books. To the facilities thus given many literary workers owed the possibility of continuing and completing their studies.[444]

The Crestadoro of the Letter Books was unfailingly polite in tone to the Free Library Committees, the officials, the councillors and the Mayor. He did not openly challenge their powers so what were these rules that he modified?

Whilst polite he was not overly deferential. His assertive spirit was kept in bounds, but he revealed it with unsatisfactory builders, the annoying bureaucrats of the Post Office or when feeling very strongly about library principles. The Committee, in fact, were sympathetic to his liberal views and accepted his recommendations on major policies such as overdue books.

Yet somehow, Crestadoro gained this subversive reputation. This may be due to his protective attitude to staff as well as his lateral thinking which showed in unexpected directions. Crestadoro's liberal approach must have been a strong element in his day-to-day activities to have so coloured his memory. The kindliness and courtesy with which he dealt with his staff and readers left their impression.

Within the boundaries of the Free Library Committee he pushed to extend the benefits and services of the Free Libraries. The Letter Books show how Suffragettes, Irish nationalists, the blind, the mechanics, the poor scholars all had a hearing from Crestadoro, and when it came to specific issues such as fines he took radical approaches. Manchester was the first library service to employ women, Sunday opening was pioneered there and, unusually, there were reader tickets for those temporarily visiting the area. Crestadoro was either a supporter or a prime mover in these progressive approaches.

The willingness to actually listen to readers, to take their complaints and suggestions seriously, to invite consultation on such matters as the desirability of Ladies Only rooms, to ask readers to recommend items for the collections, all give a flavour of an outgoing and confident organisation. One reader suggested in December 1864 that borrowers should be able to use more than one library. The reply scribbled on the back is that this should be looked at, though complex to administer. It appears that this action was taken. According to Crestadoro's letter in the *Manchester Guardian* of 22 September 1871 readers were notified that they could transfer their tickets between libraries.

This was the ethos that Crestadoro encouraged and delivered in practical terms. The Free Library Committee generally approved.

Crestadoro's working life covered many professional areas, reports, finance, the collections, policies for damaged or overdue books, the reference service, the new librarianship movement and public relations. In some of these we hear his distinctive voice, always persuading for an open and liberal approach. In some of these instances his actual words, his dicta, have survived.

As already covered, the most famous and misunderstood of his dicta was his supposed saying that all books could be catalogued from the title page alone. It is ironic that such a rigid stance should have been wrongly attributed to a man renowned for being flexible.

Credland, whose service stretched from 1866 to 1915, finally became Deputy Librarian at Campfield. He gave his old Chief Crestadoro three pages in his account of Manchester Public Libraries, ending on a fond note:

> His fifteen years direction of the work of the Manchester Public Libraries were marked by an enlightened liberality and earnest endeavour to extend the usefulness of the institutions. Nearly all the changes introduced into their management at his suggestion were in the direction of the modification or abolition of restrictions. He thoroughly believed that Free Libraries should be free, and those of Manchester are now less hampered by 'rules and regulations' than probably any other. His catalogue of the Reference Library remains a monument of patient industry and bibliographical knowledge.[445]

## Crestadoro's View

In many towns there was strong opposition to an increase in the rates to support Free Libraries. The result, as described earlier, was a patchwork of uneven coverage with provision of free or public libraries only really gathering momentum in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Successive changes in library legislation, the 1867 Reform Act, the 1870 Education Act, the transfer of powers of adoption from the ratepayers to town councils, all forwarded the acceptance of Free Libraries as part of public life. Funding always remained a problem.

Campaigners often sought Crestadoro's advice. James Booth, arguing for a Free Library in Rochdale had a long letter published in the *Rochdale Observer* 29 January 1870. He quoted experts such as Edward Edwards, James Picton of Liverpool and Crestadoro. This stands as one of the best examples of Crestadoro's fond and proud view of the Free Library. His warmth shines through. Crestadoro simply liked other people to be happy and to prosper:

> Dr. Crestadoro, chief librarian of the Manchester Free Libraries, writes, 'lt was at first thought that the library would benefit only the working classes, but being an institution essentially unpolitical and unsectarian, it has gradually become useful to all classes of the community. By the supply of healthy mental food, our readers and borrowers, besides being constantly on the increase, have acquired a more refined taste, and will read only good, cheerful, and improving literature; whilst volumes of an inferior class, which once had a certain circulation, now wait on the shelves in vain. Many a reader finds in the libraries provided for him, free of charge, the means of self-education; others forget their cares and toil in books of innocent mirth and diversion; and not a few are cheered and comforted in sickness and affliction by the silent visitors sent on a friendly errand from the shelves the 'Manchester Free Libraries.' All the favourite works are literally read to pieces by constant circulation, and most cheerfully replaced fast by our committee. Each lending library is attached to a newsroom, supplied with all the local and principal metropolitan newspapers, and other periodicals. In the morning these reading-rooms are particularly useful to the industrious classes, who, as they pass to their daily avocations, avail themselves of an opportunity of an early glance the news of the day. They also prove a great boon to all who are out employment, and are anxious to look at the advertisements for situations, and otherwise pass their time in reading, thus far saved from dissipation. In the evening the spacious rooms are invariably crowded with people of all classes, who, after the labours of the day are over, evidently enjoy the facility of spending their leisure hours in reading. There is no doubt that in this city the Free Libraries have been, and are, attended with the most beneficial results, both private and public, and that they are a most powerful auxiliary to a general system of education.

Crestadoro touched lightly here on some of the key debates surrounding Free Libraries: the class issue, the provision of inferior literature, the use of newspaper rooms by the unemployed and the link to education. But what is apparent is his pride in being part of such a benevolent institution. 'Our committee' is cheerful in replacing books, the lent books 'cheered and comforted' the sick or sad, there is 'innocent mirth and diversion' and books are 'silent visitors sent in a friendly errand'.

There are innumerable comments on the benefits of free or public libraries. In Victorian times the arguments were to persuade for their establishment and in the twenty-first century to defend their very existence. But none that I have read reflect as strongly as Crestadoro the view of the part libraries can play in the happiness and comfort of humanity. The same sentiments are found in the reminiscences of readers from hard backgrounds who found their lives transformed by walking

through the doors embellished with 'Free Library'.

The best lecturer at Leeds Library School when I studied there in 1979 was Ken Jones. He always advised us to drop in at libraries whenever waiting for a bus or train in a strange town and study how welcoming or off putting they were. Crestadoro did all in his power to make the libraries pleasant for readers and so gained his reputation for not seeing rules above people.

## Reports and Statistics

In the twentieth century the LA marked for destruction the annual reports that had painstakingly been produced by the Free Libraries from the very beginning. Fortunately the Thomas Parry Library at the University of Wales Aberystwyth rescued this unique resource and two historians, G. K. Peatling and Chris Baggs analysed the collection in a major two-part article. Manchester's reports, stamped from the start by Edwards' insistence on statistical data, fully record the history of library provision.

The Manchester Free Library Committee used the annual reports in a variety of ways, to proclaim progress with the collections, numbers of readers, new branches, to show how highly the Manchester Free Library was regarded, here and overseas, to evidence all this with statistics and to prove to both the ratepayers and the Council that their money was being wisely used. Lists of donors and donations were standard in the Manchester reports, like other authorities they found giving credit to individuals essential in furthering good relationships.

The reports usually appeared towards the end of the calendar year, fitting in nicely with the new Committee election in November. The timetable was so important that when on holiday in Harrogate, Crestadoro wrote to Axon on 2 September 1872: 'Do not forget to urge the branch librarians to let you have next week or as soon as possible the respective materials for the annual report which I hope you will cast into their proper shape with the aid of Mr. Sutton and your industrious Assistant.' Sutton as Chief Librarian dismissed one branch librarian for guessing at the figures.

Some annual reports appear under the Chief Librarian's name, but gradually they appear only under the aegis of the Chair or the Committee. It was still the Chief Librarian and his staff who had the task of compiling them

## Crestadoro's Reports

The 1865 thirteenth annual report is acknowledged to be 'for the most part prepared by Dr Crestadoro'. In comparing this with previous reports produced by Edwards or Smiles it is possible to detect a certain exuberant tone and optimistic vision that is recognisably Crestadoro's. Characteristically he is fascinated not with just reporting figures but in finding mindboggling ways to convey their impact:

> The number of readers, taken in conjunction with the number of borrowers as a common divisor of the total number of issues, and of the actual number of volumes on the shelves the institution, gives two quotients, which are equivalent to every book in the library being perused at the rate of nearly seven times by more than five persons in year. Or, assuming only one perusal per volume, it would require upwards 35 times the contents of the Free Library, or more than twice the British Museum Library, to provide the same number of borrowers and readers with the same amount of intellectual food.

Another new feature in Crestadoro's first report is a detailed breakdown of the occupations of

readers, perhaps reflecting Crestadoro's interest in people as individuals not just a collective statistic:

> The table of their occupations, as stated by themselves on their tickets, exhibits list of different avocations, embracing all classes of the community. They include 288 ladies, 220 clergymen, ministers, missionaries, and scripture readers ; 118 editors, lecturers, reporters, and other literary men ; 227 barristers, attorneys, solicitors, conveyancers, law clerks; physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, chemists, botanists, and medical students : architects, surveyors, and draughtsman ; 105 civil engineers, 502 artists, designers, and modellers; 14 M.A.s, six B.A.s, undergraduates, 3,935 students ; 2,754 professing sundry other liberal avocations ; 271 belonging to the civil and military service; and, finally, 60,137 engaged in various trades and business.

Statistics were humanised by Crestadoro's contextual references to the comfort and pleasure of reading. Just the inclusion of 'firesides' warms this sentence: 'Out of this large mass of issues no less than 311,049 volumes have been brought to the firesides of borrowers from the several lending branches'.

For a time, Crestadoro continued to enrich the annual reports with his own touches. Here is another example from the 1867 annual report:

> the remaining 420,520 volumes were borrowed in 388,755 times. Numerically, this amounts to the whole of the shelves of the five Lending Libraries being emptied, and their contents taken home, read, and returned more than nine times by as many armies of readers in the course of one year.

Gradually the imaginative phrasing declines. By 1870, Crestadoro's name is no longer given and the reports are ascribed to either Thomas Baker on behalf of the Committee or just from the Committee. But Crestadoro continued to be responsible for the content and text.

Crestadoro sent the annual reports all over the world and they were graciously received; often the letters of thanks bear gorgeous letterheads of majestic buildings, exotic islands or national emblems. Wherever there was an embassy overseas there was an annual report from Manchester Libraries.

## Answering Queries

The reports were the key source for answering the innumerable enquiries Crestadoro received. It is amazing how much detail he included in some of the replies, for example, several handwritten pages of Manchester library history, but wherever possible, a copy of the report was sent with a specific written answer to the question asked. This letter from Crestadoro on 18 October 1877 is typical:

> In reply to your letter which has been handed to me by the Town Clerk, I beg to forward a copy of our last Annual Report in which you will see that we have seven libraries. There are no conditions attaching to the receipt of books by the Committee. If there is nothing absolutely immoral in the works that are presented they usually circulate them.

A great deal of Crestadoro's time was spent on rehashing information to supplement or summarise the annual reports for enquirers. His speed of response was admirable, usually within two days. The City Librarian of Bristol, Mr. Nicholls, turning his seventeenth century library into a modern one, asked for much information but sweetened the pill by: 'I must apologise to you for thus troubling

you but it is one of the penalties attendant upon success - your magnificent world renowned Institution is looked to as a model by all who like ourselves, seek to found, however humbly, a similar boon for townsmen or Citizens.'[446]

Keeping statistics on a regular basis meant Crestadoro could supply exact answers, sometimes tabulated, on staff, readers, patterns of borrowing, costs and changes both at Campfield and in the branches. Here is one of the many examples, written from the Old Town Hall on King Street on 28 November 1877 to a W. H. Burrow:

> in reply to your inquiry I have to say that the female borrowers at our Lending Libraries number about a quarter of the whole. The actual numbers at our largest and smallest Branches are as follows:

| | Males | Females | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Chorlton** | 5193 | 1793 | 6986 |
| **Cheetham** | 2898 | 926 | 3824 |

## Misrepresentation

Crestadoro was astutely aware of how easily situations could be misrepresented by statistical categories. On 25 February 1868, he reported his investigation of the guarantors' scheme to the Committee. For this he had visited Oxford, Cambridge, Westminster, Sheffield and Liverpool and he studied the readers carefully, commenting on Liverpool's Student Room and General Room at the Reference Library:

> In the former there were only three Readers while the general reading room was literally crowded with persons manifestly reading for amusement. On going round and inspecting the subjects of reading, Mr. Crestadoro counted 44 Punch, Fun, Family Herald, London Journal, 53 Illustrated London News, Leisure Hour, Chambers Journal..and other periodicals, Novels etc.

He noted that all these were counted in as reference issues. On the lending side further observation enabled him to understand why Liverpool with 'little more than a 1/3 of the Manchester stock' had a large number of issues; they were mainly for light items and the readers changed them more frequently.

Crestadoro's conclusion is a useful pointer for those now studying the Free Libraries' annual reports:

> To such as carefully examine the actual system of the Free Libraries in Manchester and Liverpool as compared with the figures given in the respective Annual Reports it must be clear the nature and purpose of a Lending and of a Reference Department are differently understood in different places and that in their present comparative state the Manchester Free Libraries are considerably in advance of any other institutions of the same kind.

It had not taken Crestadoro long to become a fully integrated Mancunian, loyal to his city and disparaging of Liverpool.

## Furious Letter from John Plant

In turn Crestadoro was accused of misrepresentation. John Plant, Librarian of Salford Public Library, poured out his anger against Manchester and Crestadoro in an immensely long letter to the *Manchester Guardian* on 9 December 1871. One of his many complaints was Manchester's reclassification of patent specifications, replacing the Bennett Woodcroft system. This, he claimed, had driven desperate readers to Salford. He attacked Crestadoro venomously for misrepresenting issues of specifications, quoting a passage from the prestigious Boston Public Library's report: 'The issue of the patent specifications at Manchester, if not elsewhere, is counted in a somewhat strange fashion.' Another example of how closely these Free Libraries watched each other across the Atlantic. It does not appear that Crestadoro, despite Plant's taunts, responded to this tirade; perhaps the Committee decided a dignified silence was best. But the end of the letter really explains Plant's anger, a case of Manchester pride leading to denigration of their neighbour: 'It may be questionable whether the Salford Library is what is designated in the last printed report of the Manchester Free Libraries- "inferior alike in size and usefulness to the Manchester Library;" but, if it be so, it has rendered good service to the public hitherto, and nears a good report abroad.' It is difficult to argue against Plant's conclusion that Crestadoro was guilty of manipulation of statistics, exaggerating Manchester's issue rates.

In October 1877, at the Conference of Librarians, Crestadoro explained how patent specification issues were separately reported in Manchester: 'in order not to mislead the public as to the issues of volumes of books properly so called'.[447] It appears he had taken John Plant's criticism to heart.

## Writing to the Newspapers

The value of a historical record became apparent to the Committee, with the odd incident sparked by Dr. Watts, apparently claiming that he was the originator of the Manchester Free Libraries. The Minutes for 27 January 1875 record that Crestadoro was directed to investigate this and refute the claim.

Dr. Watts, a notable Manchester reformer, had indeed been involved in the first days of the Free Libraries: his name appears in the Committee minutes with various issues in the 1851 to 1852 period. He was often mentioned in the context of the first proposals for the Free Library in Manchester and no one disputed that it was he who suggested to John Potter that the Hall of Science should be bought for the Reference and Lending Library. He remained a prominent supporter of the Free Libraries and became a member of the LA.

Crestadoro's letter dated 26 January 1875 was considered in the Minutes of 27 January 1875: he had found evidence and publicised it:

> Mr Crestadoro begs to report that the Manchester Evening News having given publicity to a remark of Dr Watts which is calculated to mislead the public as to facts concerning the Free Libraries he has deemed it his duty to request the Editor to give the same publicity to a correct statement of these facts which he now submits.

So whatever happened in 1875 was soon soothed down. But it does indicate the Committee's sensitivity about Sir John Potter's reputation, Crestadoro's own loyalty to a version of a history he had not actually been involved in and his liking for newspaper correspondence. As an inventor he had used newspapers anonymously to promote himself and he continued to send letters to local newspapers on taxation reform and patent laws.

His letters inspired others to press for Free Libraries. Having read a letter from Crestadoro in the

*Daily Telegraph*, one campaigner in Reading contacted him on 25 January 1875: 'because of the letter I make bold to ask for your advice'. Those requesting a Free Library in Reading had been 'violently refused' for three years. (In 1875 the Reading Library of the local temperance society became a Free Library. Perhaps Crestadoro's advice helped towards this successful outcome.)

Crestadoro was prone to defending the Free Libraries in the newspapers. Baker intervened in one set of correspondence over the catalogue. Crestadoro must have regularly checked the newspapers and picked up anything to do with the Free Libraries. His letter to the *London Telegraph* in January 1876, in response to an erroneous statement caused some interest amongst his colleagues. Crestadoro had cited sixty-nine towns adopting the Library Act, more than Peter Lowell of Liverpool was aware of: he asked Crestadoro for the list in a letter of 8 January 1876.

The *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* of 4 May 1876 reported the monthly Council meeting and in particular the long and heated debate, even including a comic poem, over the Campfield crisis. The report reveals that even at this stage some councillors were hostile to the Free Libraries. Alderman Grundy picked on Crestadoro as a focus for his ire:

> Alderman Grundy deprecated the facetiousness and flippancy which characterised some the speeches made on his matter. He held also that the librarian, in his eagerness to achieve what he desired—the removal of the library—had been guilty of discourtesy to the Council and the committee in writing letters to the papers on the matter—a course unprecedented and highly irregular and improper.

It is unlikely that Crestadoro would have sent his letter without the Committee's permission, and his views in this letter on the barrier that 120 steps represents for readers, accords perfectly with theirs.

## Finance

Crestadoro's continuing interests in wider economics resulted in his letters, pamphlets and paper on Taxation Reform, and in his lost manuscript on Joint Stock companies. This was not of any concern to the Manchester Free Library Committee who required only tight financial housekeeping from Crestadoro.

The Free Library Committee had no cause of complaint, for Crestadoro thoroughly controlled financial accounting. He reliably produced statements for the annual reports, for scrutiny by the Council and for answering queries. Ratepayers were assured that their money was used responsibly and properly monitored.

Crestadoro was proud of his financial record; a few weeks before his death he wrote to James Strick Esq. as follows:

> We simply make out our estimates for the coming year based on the gross rateable value of the city. These estimates are passed by the Financial Committee … nothing further to do on the matter but to draw on the City Treasurer for such sums as we need.
>
> I may add that we never have overdrawn on our account in any year & therefore the contingency you refer to has not occurred to us.

## Value for Money

As he proved his worth, Crestadoro was entrusted to deal with printers, binders, publishers, booksellers and agents, negotiating good deals. In particular, he demanded quality and was sharp

against those who failed to deliver. This pleased the Committee and Crestadoro was always supported in the actions he took.

The Minutes are full of such instances. For example, the Minutes for 30 June 1866 record Crestadoro's heated exchange over the return of a damaged parcel of 900 pamphlets to the seller Mr. Palmer. Crestadoro was also critical of the pamphlets not being as good as described; Baker had insisted there should be no duplicates and 'no undue proportion of sermons'. The matter is referred to the Town Clerk. The 27 June 1866 Minutes cover Crestadoro's being 'extremely dissatisfied at the careless binding of J. Riley'.

As well as the monitoring of all library contractors, from builders and gas engineers to literary agents and bookbinders, Crestadoro had his own entrepreneurial streak which emerges in his suggestions for use of the Free Libraries for commercial advertising. He contacted firms for 'tenders for the concession to display advertisements in the periodical cases' according to the Minutes of 31 August 1870, but the Committee decided in September to postpone this idea and it was later dropped.

## Theft

On 29 September 1875, whilst Crestadoro was away on holiday, money from the library funds was stolen from Sutton's desk at Campfield. Sutton was devastated, offering that, if this was due to his carelessness, to have the money deducted from his salary. Such a theft could not be tolerated and it is interesting that 'a very clever' detective was called in; none other than the Mr. Jerome Caminada who later became famous. Caminada was born in 1844, his father was Italian and his mother Irish. As a child of the crime ridden streets of Deansgate, living not far from Campfield, he did well to bring himself out of poverty:

> Caminada could have been swallowed by the Victorian city slum in which he was conceived and bred. Instead he became the enemy of criminals from the moment when, in 1868, at the age of 24, he put on his new blue uniform and went out into the streets of Manchester to pound a beat.[448]

Although this case was never solved, Caminada turns up several times in the Library Archives, investigating cases of book theft and plates stolen from books. This example is from the Minutes of 28 June 1876:

> Detective Sergeant Caminada having described how he traced the man and Mr Chadwick and two of his assistants having given evidence, he was fined 40/- for the offence of damaging the books and 21/- for costs or to undergo one month's imprisonment.

Caminada was reputed to have carefully studied law books and this helped him to progress unusually rapidly. It took him only three years to advance from uniformed constable to sergeant in the new detective department. In all probability he studied the law books at Campfield.

Crestadoro was as active in trying to prevent theft of library property as he was in getting discounted rates for newspapers, rejecting damaged or unsatisfactory goods and keeping a sharp eye on all accounts. The 18 May 1876 Minutes discuss Crestadoro's report on a known book thief, Alan Kinder, who has taken items from several branches.

Crestadoro's approach was imaginative; he invited readers' help in safeguarding the precious collections. His proposal for putting notices up eliciting the public's help, without naming the man, was accepted as recorded in the 28 June 1876 Minutes: 'Visitors to the Libraries are earnestly

requested to co-operate with the Officials for the protection of the Library Property'.

On another occasion his notice about the theft of illustrations from newspapers at the Chorlton and Ardwick Branch aroused a reader's ire. In an anonymous letter of 30 March 1874 this reader suggested that Crestadoro should pay an unexpected visit and examine the newspapers rather than: 'the public be insulted by written notices'. However, the reader added the compliment: 'I have faith in your discretion and detective abilities in this matter.' It is noticeable how frequently in the Letter Books, readers contact Crestadoro in confidence with full trust in his dealing with sensitive situations.

There are several instances in the Letter Books of other libraries, booksellers and the police, both within and outside Manchester, contacting Crestadoro when books turned up with the Manchester Free Library stamp. They exchanged information on thieves, just as libraries do today via the Internet. Thieves were taken to court and library staff appeared to give evidence.

Yet on occasion compassion won through. The Minutes for 18 December 1878 record how the Chairman finding out the thief of the *Irish Times* was a pensioner: 'gave instructions that the charge must not be pressed against him as by a conviction for stealing his pension of two shillings per day would be forfeited.'

## Borrowing Books

The whole system of having to find two guarantors to make good losses of books prevented many from becoming borrowers. Martin Hewitt describes the barriers that were created through this system, and how the young working class, unemployed adults or those not belonging to religious circles, found it impossible to get the vouchers completed.[449] The situation eased in 1864 when the second guarantor requirement was dropped. This relaxation coincides with the new Chief Librarian's arrival and he is likely to have been the instigator.

The *Manchester Guardian* of 27 October 1864 directly attributed to him another modification of borrowing rules. Crestadoro recommended to the Committee that the guarantors' list be extended from people on the list of citizens of Manchester or of burgesses of Salford, to all those on the parliamentary lists of both cities. This was accepted. Crestadoro's reason was reported as: 'In order to increase the facilities for borrowing books'.

## Overdue, Lost and Damaged Books

Librarians have always had a difficult dual role of both befriending and policing readers.

However liberal, rules form a barrier and there is no escaping the fact that the librarian is in authority, the custodian of the collections on behalf of readers past, present and future.

As far as possible, Crestadoro was flexible on rules and tried to simplify them as several instances in the Minutes record. On 27 April 1870, Crestadoro proposed a new scheme to the Campfield Sub Committee for chasing up overdue books and included an idea for tickets to be used for issue and recall of books. In familiar Crestadoro language: 'to obtain the following improvements':

1. To diminish the work of the Librarian
2. To register more than one issue at a time thus enabling the Librarian and Assistants to attend to more than one borrower at a time
3. To secure the means of intimation of charges in the borrowers residence.
4. To facilitate the means of Knowing what books are overdue

> 5. To enable any Borrower to obtain if he desire it, a receipt vouching that he has returned the book he borrowed

A sample ticket was attached. This was quite a radical proposal from Crestadoro: Kelly credits Mr. Vigo, the Bradford Librarian with the invention of a card system to replace ledgers in 1873.[450] (The American librarian, Nina E.Browne, implemented the card issue system of 1895 that became widespread until automation arrived.) Crestadoro's innovation was not taken up by the Committee, but it should be noted as another of his possible 'firsts'.

Fines for overdue, lost or damaged books have always been a problem for libraries.

In 1875, Crestadoro was commissioned by a special Free Library Sub Committee to look at the practices of other Free Libraries and to make recommendations for Manchester. Fortunately, both his report to the Sub Committee and related correspondence survive. Presumably this was an ongoing issue, for some of the letters are dated 1876 and it is clear from them that Crestadoro was still interested in other libraries' approaches. The detailed replies he received indicate a good co-operative spirit.

Crestadoro had undertaken a thorough survey and his report is clear, succinct and the recommendations in line with his liberal approach. He sought remedies rather than punishments. Crestadoro's study is unique for the time, and as far as I am aware has not been picked up as a source for library history. At the end of the report, Overdue Detention of Books, in the June 1875 Sub Committee Minutes, he concludes:

> Mr. Crestadoro would respectfully submit that the Manchester Free Libraries being open on freer and more liberal terms than any other Public Library, a system of fines would hardly answer the purpose in view. But since borrowers in general do not seem to give themselves much trouble about returning books except when they want another, as a means of prevention better than cure, a notice to the effect that unreturned books would be sent for by a special messenger at the expense of defaulters is more likely to stimulate those borrowers who are habitually neglectful to bestir themselves in order not to incur the expense.

He proposed the exact procedures for this (with the usual Crestadoro detail) and his plan was fully adopted in October 1875. Other libraries wrote in to ask for copies of the report; Crestadoro's influence spread.

The loan period was short but the policy for renewals generous, as Crestadoro outlined it on 18 January 1877 to a Mr. J Birch, enquiring on behalf of the New Mechanics' Institution: 'In reply to your inquiry I have to say that the time allowed for reading books taken from the Lending Department varies from seven to fourteen days, and that this time may be renewed on application except in the cases of current periodicals and new books or where the books are required by other borrowers.'

Crestadoro even understood readers who were tempted to annotate books. In an undated draft letter to the *Manchester Examiner and Times*, probably early in September 1871, he responded as follows to a critic: 'I do not say it is impossible that now and then a borrower may not be able to resist the temptation to "underline" and "annotate" but such marks on them are taken out by the librarians whenever they chance to come across them.'

In his first few weeks as Chief Librarian, Crestadoro proposed in his report to the Committee dated 23 August 1864 that an exception might be made in the rule that debarred tracing of engravings so

that readers could copy patent diagrams: 'allowing tracing with pencil could do no injury and might prove very useful to the many applicants.' This really indicates Crestadoro's sympathy with inventors and engineers. If John Hewish were still alive he might know whether the POL ever allowed this practice; there is no mention of it in his book *Rooms near Chancery Lane*. I suspect Crestadoro very much wanted this facility himself as a reader.

Crestadoro's expertise in the book trade was acknowledged by the Committee authorizing him to fix the compensation due for lost or damaged books. Sutton send a circular to the branch librarians on 6 August 1873: 'I am instructed by the Chairman to say that the instructions of the Chief Librarian must in future be taken before fixing the price to be paid by borrowers or guarantors for the loss or damage of books.'

Of course deliberate damage was not treated lightly; the collections were precious and funds limited. Great effort was made to find missing items. In 1878, Crestadoro received the report from the Cheetham Branch that a search for a lost third volume had been succesful. There is an element of odd hunour with the title: 'I beg to report that the book "Never Forgotten" has been found.'

Crestadoro, in several letters demonstrated his pride in Manchester Free Libraries and their collections, which he continued to develop. He was firm in pursuing compensation from those who had abused the privileges, or from their guarantors. The letter sent to a Mr. William Lucas, 8 Bengal Street, Oldham Road on 30 September 1873 is one of many such: 'I am instructed by the Committee of the Public Free Libraries to request you to pay the sum of 3sh/6d for damage done to the book Ball's Indian Mutiny Vol 1 by Edward Finn for whom you are a guarantor. The Committee hope that you will be able to assist them to find the borrower Finn, in order that he may be prosecuted.'

## Post Office: I decline, like an Englishman, to desert my post

Crestadoro ran a personal crusade on the business of postal rates.

The Postmaster of Manchester, J. B. L. Beaufort Esq., and then the Postmaster General to whom the matter was referred, cannot have relished the conflict over postal rates as much as Crestadoro did. The core issue was over the interpretation of book postage, and Crestadoro argued his case in a high style of indignation and fervour. This was a lengthy battle and the eventual outcome was not in Crestadoro's favour, but on passion and multiple arguments alone Crestadoro should have won it.

One examples will suffice. On 29 December 1875, Crestadoro argued his case with the Postmaster General himself:

> I beg to acknowledge your communication 17 07 68 concerning my correspondence with the Postmaster of Manchester.
>
> You say the document in question contains a communication of the nature of a letter and not a circular letter and it is not therefore entitled to transmission at the book rate of postage.
>
> I feel sure you will excuse me if, though only a Naturalized British Subject, I decline, like an Englishman, to desert my post when this is placed upon truth and right. Each of the documents in question should be treated as if it were the only one posted. If only one is considered, I submit, it neither 'contains a communication of the nature of a letter' nor is it 'a circular' but belongs to a third category, the book post, in strict accordance with the terms of the Postal Regulations

The importance of all this is apparent in a report Crestadoro made to the Committee as recorded in the Minutes for 23 February 1876. Six years earlier as described above, Crestadoro had attempted to persuade the Committee to accept his scheme for a simplified system for the safe issue and return of books. He now seized the opportunity to revive the idea:

> The chief librarian reported that the new Circular Notice to Borrowers for the return of outstanding books is not allowed to pass through the post office at the Book Rate of 1/2 but must be stamped as a letter. As this would entail an expenditure of upwards of £40 a year Mr Crestadoro begs to suggest that the postage be charged to the borrowers as originally intended. Out of 840 circulars posted to borrowers for overdue books during the first month 804 books were duly returned in consequence. The remainder were found to be borrowers who had removed from the address given showing that the regulation concerning the change of residence is not observed. On the messenger being sent to recover the books it was discovered that borrowers take out new books without returning those previously issued to them, the Librarians having no means of knowing this. In those cases in which recourse has to be had to the Guarantors for payment only one could be induced to pay for the book after repeated application. To remedy these evils Mr Crestadoro begs to refer to his former reports on the working of the Guarantors system and on the means of simplifying the issue of books so as to secure all the objects required.
>
> Resolved That the Chief Librarian be instructed to issue post cards instead of circulars for obtaining the return of overdue books.

It is a neat example of Crestadoro's persistence and of his quick thinking that he tried to turn defeat by the Post Office into a win for a long cherished improvement. It is a shame he was not fully successful.

## Compassion and Courtesy

The Letter Books reflect an admirable culture of compassion and courtesy, and a determination that all classes should be made equally welcome to the Manchester Free Libraries. This had been the approach from the very first days, and Crestadoro fully endorsed it.

Although the reply is not included in the Out Letters it is likely that Crestadoro would have been generous in his decision on the matter that John Mitchell, the branch librarian at Ancoats raised on 6 March 1865. Mitchell's hesitation to pursue compensation reflects well on the culture of Manchester Free Libraries under its humane Chief:

> You will excuse me for asking your advice in a small matter, the occurrence of a like circumstances ordinarily being disposed of without any hesitation on my part.
>
> The volume in the boy's hand 'Vernon's Pride', has only been thrice borrowed. The last borrower had injured it, I conceive, irreparably - at any rate, damaged it so shamefully, both inside and out, as to render its marketable value very small. She is a working girl and unable, I dare say, to pay the full price of it, without some difficulty. What the price should be I am not able to say. Will you kindly inform me whether she must replace it? or whether a fine under the circumstances - and if so, how much p may be extracted?

Correspondence from reformers and liberal librarians repeatedly indicate how well known Crestadoro was for his generous principles and how he would be expected to sympathise with their efforts.

Peter Begg was a notable campaigner for Free Libraries in Scotland. He admired Crestadoro and frequently conferred with him. On 15 November 1871, Peter Begg wrote from the *Advertiser* Office in Dundee to ask for a copy of the nineteenth report. He congratulated Crestadoro on the 'splendid success' of the Library and significantly highlighted the lack of barriers and penalties as a key factor: 'Your policy has been to extend the privileges to all classes without distinction and you have your reward. Ours has been to restrict its use and by threatened imposition of penalties to repel the working classes'. A later librarian at Dundee, John MacLauchan, appointed in 1874, tried to change this snobbishness. Like Begg, he knew Crestadoro detested such barriers and wrote to him confidingly on several occasions. One of the most interesting letters, dated 5 January 1876, in reference to an article in the *Daily Telegraph*, shows MacLuachan's sensitivity towards the pride of women workers:

> Commenting on the fact, that 843 of our female readers did not state their occupation, the writer assumed that the large increase in the number of novels we issued, was principally die to 'idle and romantic young ladies.' This assumption is based on a series of mistakes - 843 Females may be 'romantic' but are certainly not 'idle', the majority of them being workers in Power Loom Jute Factoriers, who, earning over 20/- a week dress themselves stylishly, and wishing to pass for 'Young Ladies' will not state their occupation.

In Axon's phrase 'perfect equality' was the approach Manchester Free Libraries took to all readers: 'Dozens of times I have seen a Member of Parliament sitting at the same table with an artisan or warehouseman and this mixture of classes is not confined to that department but obtains more or less in all sections of our institutions.'[451]

Here is The Rev. George Bowden speaking at the inauguration of the new building for the Hulme Branch in 1866:

> I enquired from the chairman of the Free Libraries Committee 'what were the conditions on which a man could enter and use the newsroom ?' 'He must be decently dressed, and conduct himself properly; that is all.' I thought, 'decently dressed!' that is a phrase that may have an awkward and unpleasant application by some officious doorkeeper, so I said, 'what do you mean, sir, by being 'decently dressed'?'' 'I mean,' was the reply, 'we could not do with a sweep in his working dress, or a man filthy.' 'Oh!' I said, "then you mean that any man who is clean, and who keeps the rules, may enter in avail himself, without questioning, of your provision?' 'Yes,' was answer. So it matters not whether the dress is cotton or wool, coarse or fine, old or new, you may come and welcome, if you are only clean and you keep the rules.[452]

## Out of Town Visitors

Crestadoro took a very hospitable approach to visitors from outside Manchester who wished to read or borrow books.

He was inordinately proud that people came from all over Britain to consult the Manchester Free Libraries. There seems to have been no formal discussion on the policy of out of town readers using the Free Libraries and it may not have been an aspect the Committee had thought of, though later on the provision caused some astonishment.

I suspect that Crestadoro, by announcing this as an achievement in the annual reports made it difficult for anyone to then oppose. This is a good example both of his generous approach to his readership and of his subtlety. Crestadoro's first annual report of 1865 gives the first mention of out

of town visitors:

> The readers in the reference library have increased from 68,121 to 71,065. Of this number, 62,597 reside in Manchester and Salford, 6,887 have come from different places in the counties of Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Bedfordshire, Devonshire, Durham, Leicestershire, Norfolk, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire; 83 from London, four from Wales, 16 from Scotland, 10 from Ireland, and six from the United States of America.

Manchester's liberality was later criticised as somehow cheating their ratepayers. This is from Greenwood writing in 1899: 'This question of allowing non-residents within the borough to borrow books has been rather a burning one in Manchester, as it has at other places. The ratepayers of Manchester were astounded to learn that one-third of the number of members of their libraries were non-resident members, and that such persons have the use of the libraries free of cost.'[453]

Crestadoro's attitude is refreshing and may well reflect his own gratitude for being able to access the wealth of the POL and the BM. There clearly was an intention not to restrict visitors to the City boundary and this would be in accord with Sir John Potter's view of Campfield being the BM of the North, a view that Crestadoro was prone to repeat.

If this approach had continued there might have been a nationally accesssible public library network: to me, Crestadoro's generousity of spirit, was the right way. The disadvantage of the 'liberality of Manchester' as Greenwood called it was that it gave neighbouring areas reasons not to develop their own libraries. Crestadoro's friend, John Pink of the Cambridge Free Library described their policy as allowing: 'any person to subscribe who lives in the area of the Cambs. County Council'.[454] He found that one urban district had so many readers using the Cambridge Free Library that they agreed to contribute to their rate.

Crestadoro allowed everyone to access the Reference Library at Campfield, as he explained to a correspondent from Brighton, G. Scott Esq., on 9 June 1873: 'As to the Chief Library, anyone may obtain books to use in the Reading Room but not able to take out, by merely filling up a "Reader's ticket:" form of which I enclose a copy'.

He was proud of his open approach; it was in line with his notion of England being a benign, generous and welcoming country as he expressed in the *The Art of Making Catalogues*. He wrote happily to a Mr. Wright of Plymouth on 7 November 1877:

> In answer to your inquiry I beg to say that we will issue books to anyone, no matter where residing or whether employed in town, who presents a ticket which has been obtained in exchange for a voucher properly filled-up by a Citizen of Manchester or a Burgess of Salford, or Parliamentary votes of either place.
>
> This privilege to non-residents is somewhat largely used, and we have occasionally had a resident in London or a visitor from America among our Borrowers.

I am a registered borrower and reader with Manchester Public Libraries even though I live in Leeds. I attribute this generous provision to the policy instigated long ago by Crestadoro.

## Reference Services

Another saying of Dr. Crestadoro's that has caused debate amongst later librarians was his stated aim of making the library, rather than the librarian, support reference queries.

Samuel Rothstein picked up the saying in his article *Across the Desk: 100 Years of Reference*

*Encounters*:

> 'It is the duty of a librarian to make himself **useless**,' pontificated the eminent Dr. Andrea **Crestadoro**, meaning that the catalogue and the rest of the library 'apparatus' should be so perfected as to obviate the need for personal assistance.[455]

This was repeated in Prudence W. Dalrymple's article *Closing the Gap: The Role of the Librarian in Online Searching*.[456] She gave his approach serious consideration and concluded that: 'the introduction of user-friendly software designed to promote end-user access to systems has made the fulfillment of Crestadoro's statement a distinct possibility.'

The information landscape has changed even more radically since Rothstein's article was published in 1984 and the role of the librarian has evolved, sometimes painfully, to cope. Crestadoro was right and farsighted in his view: ideally no one wants an intermediary between themselves and the sources of information. The traumatic fight to let readers have books on open access in the Free Libraries, led by John Pink of Cambridge who never had closed access, Charles Sutton who hated it and then Duff Brown, is strangely reminiscent of the shift that is represented by digitization. When the opportunity is there, people prefer to directly search and retrieve for themselves rather than through librarians.

One of the purposes of Crestadoro's printed catalogues was to provide browsing at home so readers could plan which items to request on their visit. He appreciated that cost could be a deterrent and in his usual conciliatory way suggests to the Committee a fairer system (27 March 1878 Minutes):

> Mr. Crestadoro begs to report that the Index-Catalogue of the Hulme Branch will be ready in a few days. Considering the anomaly in the prices of the index-catalogues of the other branches he begs to submit the propriety of adopting in future a general fixed charge for all – say one shilling- under the charge for each Branch to be regulated in proportion to the number of pages. As to the stock in hand at the various Branches it would not be advisable to raise the charge for the catalogues which are sold at low price up to the rate of the highest price but the reverse might be done if you think proper.

He adds his usual precise calculation to guide the Committee – printing for the Hulme catalogue was at the rate of £4.16.6 per ½ sheet or eight pages. The number of pages was nearly 200, the total cost about £120 for 200 copies which works out at 8d per hundred pages.

Crestadoro was well aware of how people wanted to use libraries. He was experienced as a reader, researcher and agent. He had observed the habits of his Manchester readers as well as looking at them in other Free Libraries when he was sent on various information gathering missions.

## A Rare Glimpse

Crestadoro appears in a very good light in Thomas Greenwood's *Public Libraries*, published in 1890. It would be good to know who the young man in the anecdote was, but the main point is the time and trouble Crestadoro took with someone then unknown and unimportant. As the passage covers several aspects it is worth quoting in full:

> The present writer remembers well old Dr. Crestadoro when, as a lad, he was a reader at the old Campfield Library. The reputation of the old doctor will ever be associated with the preparation of a memorable catalogue issued in 1864. It consisted of two parts, the first being a list of authors' names in alphabetical order, anonymous works being placed under their subjects, and the second an index of subjects. His library work is well known in the

> district. He was rather a recluse so far as other librarians were concerned; but one gentleman who holds a high post as chief librarian in a large northern town, and whose catalogue is one which has received universal admiration, tells how as a young man he sent some MS. copy of his first catalogue to Dr. Crestadoro and sought a personal interview with him. In the most kindly way the old doctor looked through his sheets, made a few suggestions, and chatted pleasantly with the chief librarian in embryo.[457]

## Authors

The Letter Books show how respected Crestadoro was as a scholar; authors, bibliophiles, readers regularly consulted him and he responded with courtesy to their enquiries. The Letter Books suggest that it was mainly prominent and well educated readers who had this contact through the Letters. He developed quite a fan club; there are many expressions of gratitude to him.

Written requests arrived for items, for suggestions for suitable items, as well as for information. It is not unusual to find in the Letter Books that certain readers sent requests for items to be lent, presumably to be handed to servants or other messengers for delivery. (Later, there was some concern about children collecting books, particularly when they had dirty hands.)

Aspiring authors confided in the courteous Dr. Crestadoro.Some authors kept him up to date with their progress, so he must have given them a sympathetic hearing.

M. Higinbottom writes from Millgate House Stockport (printed letter heading) on 1 June 1875 returning some volumes and requesting: 'volumes 24 and 37 and 57 of the same series'. He adds: 'I am getting on pretty well with my Book but find it very slow work with the…'

A Sophie C. Scott sends a letter from London (Letter 75/54, 1875), thanking Crestadoro for his kind aid for her husband's work: 'he is seriously ill and totally unable to attend to any matter of business properly'.

From Great Yarmouth the author Augustus J. Harvey wrote to Crestadoro to ask for the annual report and whether his donated science charts and pamphlets had been of use: 'I am very anxious to learn if in any way I have been useful to so very important an institution of one of the greatest if not the most important commercial city in the world.'[458] (Letter 49/54, 1876)

From even further afield, a Signora A.S.L. Quarritore, formerly Miss Jarvis, sent Crestadoro a postcard from Naples, Villa del Guide, presenting her compliments, as well as four copies of her translation into French of a historical sketch by Layward:

> Since then the political condition of these countries has undergone a vast change. Moreover as a retrospective picture of the past, she indulges the hope that it may prove interesting to some of the numerous readers of the library which she believes to be one of the most flourishing and best organized in England and where she has the most satisfaction of placing them, hoping that they may be preserved and duly catalogued.

An even more striking example of how Crestadoro was esteemed by the cultured elite of Manchester is the friendly correspondence with Mrs. Gaskell's daughter, Julia. This letter of 17 April 1878, is a reference query. No address is given; such informality is a good indication of the ease of contact between them:

> Dear Mr Crestadoro

> Have you in the Free Library any book of the Engravings of the pictures in the Louvre? We are very anxious to see a picture of Joan of Aragon, Queen of Naples, and there is one in the Louvre we know but we cannot find in Manchester an engraving of it. I must apologise for troubling you in this matter. I hope you will forgive the liberty I am taking and believe me to be Yours truly Julia Gaskell

Crestadoro's most persistent fan was the Reverend Henry Green (1801-1873), Unitarian minister at Brook Street Chapel in Knutsford. He, his wife and four daughters were intimate friends with the Gaskells and their four daughters: their correspondence preserved at The University of Manchester Library is an incomparable resource. The Manchester Library Archive holds several long letters from Henry Green to Crestadoro, beautifully written and scholarly. He sought Crestadoro's help on scholarly researches, tracking down Italian books and manuscripts and translating passages, ending one letter of 10 December 1870 as: 'I beg you to pardon the liberty I am taking but I know your zeal in questions of this kind, and throw myself on your benevolent indulgence.' Crestadoro must have been relieved when Henry Green's eldest daughter learnt Italian and the author promised to only ask Crestadoro for help when he really had to.[459]

## Odd Enquiries

I am aware from my own years at the BL that there can be court cases where it is critical to pinpoint exactly when information became publicly available, usually through technical reports or patents, and staff are asked to ferret out the answer. I remember one of these cases as the only time in my life I was offered a bribe. Crestadoro received a letter dated 5 January 1856 from Tillord, Godden & Hulme of 34, Old Jewry, London that is reminiscent of the ones I dealt with, though no bribe is involved here:

> Will you allow us to inquire with reference to some proceedings in which we are engaged before the Chancery of the High Court of Justice whether you have in your library a book published by E.R.Jewett of Buffalo 'Illustrations to accompany the Report of the Commissioners' and if so what or about when received in this country? Patents for 1863 (United States) believe it was published in 1864 or in 1865.

It is a tribute to the reputation of Manchester Free Libraries and their commercial and technical collections that they were thought of as a source of help.

Another service was the provision of copied information. One organization, (a Victorian forerunner of the firms shown in the television series *Heir Hunters*), contacted Crestadoro in pursuit of a newspaper advertisement, and again this illustrates the high reputation of Manchester as an alternative to the BM.

This letter, dated 1 March 1879, is from the 'Next of Kin Office, established 1825, Robert Chambers, Advertisements for Heirs, Legatees, Missing Friends, Unclaimed Money'; the style of the letter suggest previous correspondence:

> 'London Evening News 20 June 1809 - Kindly let me know if you have the above in your Library. They have not a copy at the British Museum. If so, would you kindly have copies for me an advert relating to the Next of Kin of Joseph Walton and others and I will remit your charge for copy.'

Crestadoro received all sorts of odd requests and he invariably responded promptly and courteously. One collector of signatures, A.P. Moors from St. Clements Vicarage in Truro, asked him on 22 July 1873 if he could obtain one from Edward Edwards. Crestadoro did this within a few

days, with Axon's help, stimulating a further request for any other important signatures he might come across. A.P. Moors also asked whether accounts were true that Edwards had died by his own hand.

One challenging request came from Charles Thompson at Smyrna Twist Mills on 8 December 1865 for: 'a book to suit a young lady rather low spirited - it must be a lively, eventful, witty book, but not one in which the Divine attributes are profanely used! An Irish story would suit.'

In return for his invariably courteous and prompt help, Crestadoro received donations, Quaker collections from Charles Thompson and theatrical books from Charles Calvert amongst them.

## Professional Status

The Letter Books evidence that Crestadoro had a benevolent and scholarly reputation amongst librarians. His model catalogue was followed respectfully, his sympathetic and flexible attitudes to such matters as fines, rules and discipline had a beneficial effect and he spared no effort in building up the collections that readers wanted.

He designed his catalogues as a practical and easy means of discovery, he developed staff to give the best service and he tried to be as inclusive as possible. The fruits of his and his staff's labours were the happiness, purpose and his guiding word 'improvement' of readers.

It is too lengthy to be a dictum but this is a good statement of Crestadoro's professional motivation. As in the Reference Library Catalogue he addressed the Reader directly; the introduction to *Index-Catalogue of the Chorlton & Ardwick Lending Branch* is simply entitled 'To the Reader'. He finishes with praise of the valuable collection of Pamphlets now ready to be discovered. This long paragraph opens with a statement that neatly encapsulates Crestadoro's principles and motivations:

> Nothing can more effectually conduce to the rapid progress of knowledge, and the consequent well-being of mankind, than an efficient aid to the search of what has previously been written on any given subject.

[442] 'Letters on our affairs CUSTOS VERITAS'

[443] *North Manchester Observer,* 5 Sept 1952 (The Manchester Library Archive Centenary Book)

[444] Ernest Axon, *Charles W. Sutton, M.A. Chief Librarian, Manchester Public Libraries 1879-1920*, (privately printed, 1921) p.9

[445] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, pp.36, 37

[446] MA, In Letter 70/214

[447] *Transactions and Proceedings of the Conference of Librarians held in London October*, 1877, p.178

[448] 'Foreword' in Jerome Caminada, *Caminada The Crime Buster* (London: True Crime, 1996) p. 1

[449] Martin Hewitt, 'Confronting the modern city: the Manchester Free Public Library, 1850-80', *Urban History,* 27:1 (2000) pp.62-88

[450] Kelly, *History of Public Libraries*, p.89

[451] MA, In Letter 307 18 September 1872

[452] *Report of the Proceedings of a Public Meeting. Held in the Town Hall, Hulme on the evening of Friday, June 15th, 1866, on the occasion of the inauguration of the new building for the Hulme Branch in Stretford Road Manchester*, (Manchester: printed by James Collins,1866)

[453] Greenwood, *Public libraries,* p.59

[454] John Pink, *After Fifty Years; a Retrospect of the Public Free Library, Cambridge, 1855-1905* (Cambridge: Cambridge Public Library Service, 1905) p. 11

[455] Samuel Rothstein, 'Across the desk: 100 years of reference encounters', *Canadian Library Journal* 34 (October 1977) pp.391-99

[456] Prudence W. Dalrymple, 'Closing the gap: the role of the librarian in online searching', *RQ* 24:2 (Winter 1984) pp. 177-185

[457] Greenwood, Public Libraries, p.57

[458] MA, In Letter 49/54

[459] MA, In Letter 71/148

# Chapter Seventeen: A Proud Monument - The Collections

> It is a proud monument of the enlightened liberality of those gentlemen by whom the Library was originally founded, and of the corporation by whom it has since been not only maintained, but considerably increased.[460]

## Various Opinions

As a young man Axon, with aspirations to literature, instigated correspondence with eminent figures. Mullins, Chief Librarian of Birmingham, debated library matters with him and in a letter of 17 December 1868 gave a very trenchant comparison of Manchester and Birmingham collections: 'The [Birmingham] Reference Library, consisting as it does, not of an olla podrida of gifts and wholesale purchases but of books purchased singly and specially in consideration of their fitness for this department is exceptionally choice - not so much curious as generally good.'[461]

Were his criticisms valid? Edward Edwards had tried to fulfill the Committee's policy in the first purchases for Campfield. As he wrote retrospectively in *Free Town Libraries*: 'They desired to lay the groundwork of the best attainable collection of books on Commerce, and on the literature of Politics and of Political and Social Economy, in all their branches. They also desired to set as good an example as possible to the future Free Libraries of other towns, in the way of gathering the best attainable series of books on the Local History and the Local affairs.'[462]

According to Munford, Edwards established a remarkable reference collection at Campfield: 'He had well and truly laid the foundation for the stock-building essential for the first great provincial reference library.'[463] In comparison, The Lending Library was random, a muddle of donations, ill

judged multiple purchases, censored material and strange omissions such as the poems of Tennyson and Browning. This accords with Mullins' view.

(Tennyson may well have been excluded for his vicious lines:

> Though the niggard throats of Manchester may bawl,
> What England was, shall her true sons forget?
> We are not cotton spinners all,
> But some love England and her honour yet.[464]

He also insulted John Bright in his poem *Maud*: lines he subsequently suppressed.)

Munford concluded that Manchester, despite all the problems of funding and wear and tear of book-stocks, maintained: 'steady progress during the first thirty years'.[465] Half of this period was under Crestadoro's management.

It was characteristic of the Manchester open library culture that readers could put forward suggested titles in the library subscription books, as Crestadoro describes on 12 January1877: 'A subscription book is kept available to the public in which any Reader may suggest the addition of any book. This is laid before the Committee who decide upon all purchases.'

Requests from readers illuminate collection weaknesses. A passionate letter came from a printer on 6 July 1876: he had searched all the specifications, 'been to your library scores of times paying railway fare every time', scoured the books on printing, 'almost a waste of time to look at them they are so old', and finally tracked down a book published in America on the subject he needed. He begged Crestadoro to purchase it: 'with a small family and Bad trade as well as Bad debts I am unable to get the Book'. It appears from Crestadoro's note that the book was obtained for him.

## Axon's View

There are rich sources for analysing the Manchester Free Library collections: Edwards' opinion in *Town Libraries*, the statistical reports, historical accounts, archive documents and the printed catalogues for Campfield and the branches. There is also Axon's informed view.

Axon knew the Campfield shelves by heart, he had worked on the catalogues, he was a total bibliophile and his assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the Reference collection is to be trusted. In his 1877 handbook, he described the collection as weak in law and medicine, strongest in English history and literature, theology and morals numerically fewer than other classes, but comprehensive in approach, including works on other faiths. Chess, botany, astronomy, civil engineering are all well represented. Axon singled out: 'its remarkable collection of pamphlet literature, and especially of tracts relating to politics and trade.'[466]

Axon was always appreciative of the rare books. He requested permission to give a talk to the Manchester Literary Club on the treasures of the Campfield collection and this took place on 23 February 1875 in the hall of the Reference Library. Tables were placed the length of the room and there was: 'a large attendance, including several ladies'.[467]

The reprinted talk makes entertaining reading, impressive both for the range and depths of Axon's scholarship and for the gems that are revealed. Dr. Crestadoro, Mr. Sutton and the assistant librarians were thanked for their courtesy, attention and the: 'uniform kindness of the Library officials to all who had occasion to consult the collection.'

## Funding

Crestadoro was well aware of the difficulty of building adequate collections with no definite policy, with limited funds, and when, as consequence of success, so many books needed replacing or rebinding. Manchester had changed local regulations so library rates (limited by the 1850 Act to buildings and staff) could be spent on books, but the Committee was still parsimonious. The 1855 Library Act increased the rate to a penny in the pound and allowed spending on books, but still had complex and confusing limitations. The Free Library Committee had to tread warily: some of the Council were hostile, and they tried not to spend the full funds. The 1869 annual report proudly announced an underspend of £11,445. Edwards took pains to point out in Free Town Libraries that: 'Mere saving is not economy'.[468] He criticized his old employer, Manchester Free Libraries, for their strategy:

> Had the maximum of the Library rate been applied in Manchester ever since the first introduction of the Act of 1850, the existing Libraries would have been very nearly doubled in extent. They would probably have been more than doubled in efficiency of working. Nor would the building in which the chief library of that rich and flourishing city is placed, long have presented so striking and unfavorable a contrast to the library building which forms one of the many architectural beauties of Liverpool.[469]

By 1870, as Credland described, the Committee: 'began to feel strongly the pinch of poverty'.[470] Thomas Baker started to battle with the Council for an adequate yearly amount but it was an endless struggle. The Town Clerk, Joseph Heron, instructed Crestadoro on 27 March 1872 that £500 could not be spent on books for the Reference Library but had to be put aside for a reduction of an estates debt. Crestadoro instantly warned the Committee that the Reference Collection had: 'fallen greatly in arrear of its requirements.'

## Crestadoro's Input

The Committee had full authority for selection and, occasionally, individual prejudices, such as Councillor Harry Rawson's hatred of *Moll Flanders*, prevented books being acquired or made available. But generally there seems to have been little censorship and inclusion even of material that reflected extreme political views. There is evidence that books withdrawn after complaints were then 'clandestinely introduced' back on the shelves as one reader, bigoted against anything 'antiscriptural' fulminated.[471]

Crestadoro seems to have encouraged the Committee to let people have banned items, which were in the catalogue but not generally made available. A plumber thanked him for letting him see Boccaccio's Decameron,[472] whilst a medical student in September 1872 angrily demanded reasons for the refusal. At least censorship was not apparently on class lines.

The view of the Free Libraries being meant for all, prompted provision even for minorities such as the blind. Smiles, as described, was particularly sympathetic to the needs of teachers and set up a specific collection for them.

So how did Crestadoro operate within the confines of a limited budget, no systematic policy, dependence on donations and always under the authority of the Committee?

The documentation shows Crestadoro earning the trust of the Committee and being left to develop the collection with minimal consultation. The final word was theirs but Crestadoro increasingly approved donations for them, tracked down rarities at bargain prices, assiduously contacted his networks to get free or ephemeral material and set up exchange agreements. He fulfilled their remit

for the priority of the technical and commercial collections. As both the Committee and Crestadoro were of liberal sympathies, there seems to have been no conflict of purpose.

Crestadoro demonstrated again his capacity to take infinite pains of observation and analysis in collection decisions. At Campfield on 22 December 1864, the results of his survey of newspaper use were reported to the Committee. Readers for the different newspapers had been counted every hour for twenty-four days: the *Manchester Guardian* proved the most popular. As a result of this study of newspapers and then periodicals, the *Scientific American* was cancelled; did Crestadoro rather enjoy this, remembering their long-ago ridicule of his inventions? Probably not, as he always seems to have been professional and objective in his approaches.

Manchester's civic pride was also fulfilled by the acquisition of rare treasures either through purchase or donation. Thomas Baker, Crestadoro, Crossley, Sutton and Axon were all bibliophiles and intent on enriching the collections with rare items whenever opportunity arose.

There was heavy dependence on donations, a mixed blessing, but the Committee did try to cover specific subjects, for example, directing Crestadoro to look at ornithology. On 27 March 1878 he reported that he found: 'no publication which brings down this branch of Zoology to the later points of discovery and investigation'.

There is little from Crestadoro on the great fiction debate, the spending of rate money on 'devourers of fiction', that concerned his contemporaries – and his successors ever since. I can find only one comment from Crestadoro and sensibly, it is that all reading is productive. He replied thus to a query from a Mr. Roberts of Swansea on 8 November 1875:

> The books placed before our borrowers are selected from every class of literature and our experience shows that they are extensively used. You will, I think, find it advisable at starting to provide with a liberal hand popular books of every kind, not omitting fiction, and if the borrowers favour that class the most, as is invariably the case at the beginning, do not be discouraged. You will no doubt find, as we do, that the use of the more digestible material fosters a taste for solid profitable food.

The young Manchester librarians were not likely to be pious about the adventure stories they had enjoyed themselves; as Axon wrote on 13 April 1872, reflecting on the Manchester ethos: 'And after all a man will not take much harm from reading Dickens and Thackeray, nor can we blame a lad for indulging in one of Marryat's novels'.

## Grey Literature

Martin Hewitt, in his key study, *Confronting the modern city: the Manchester Free Public Library, 1850-80*, emphasised the omnipotence of the Committee even in such professional matters as collection development. He concluded that there was little coherent policy: 'the only systematic effort at acquisition which was undertaken in the whole period were the considerable efforts made from the later 1860s to build up holdings of the annual reports and ephemeral literature of local societies and institutions.'[473]

Crestadoro must be credited with this drive in the 1860s. One of his main contributions to the richness of the collections came from his recognition of the value of ephemera and what would now be termed grey literature, publications not emanating from mainstream publishers but from organisations reporting on their activities or research. Crestadoro's enthusiasm for this material ensured its growth from the 1860s onwards, with an especial local emphasis.

He always accepted material offered by organisations; a farsighted policy for much of this would otherwise be lost to history. He wrote eagerly on 5 March 1877 to accept an offer of Quaker literature: 'Any such books you could favour us with would be very acceptable to our Libraries, especially as we have already in the Lending Libraries and Reference department a considerable number of Quaker works most of which have from time to time been presented by the Society of Friends in Manchester.'

He was proactive in seeking material not available through mainstream channels and perceptive in recognizing its long-term value: 'We are desirous of procuring a set of the Oddfellows Magazine for preservation in the Reference Library. As I understand this is not printed for general sale, I beg to ask if you could favour the Library by putting me in the way of obtaining the publication – both back numbers and current numbers.'[474]

Some weeks later on 18 October 1877, presumably when this request got nowhere, the persistent Crestadoro wrote on similar lines to a Mr Scholfield, Secretary of Oddfellows: 'May I ask if you have any spare sets or could put us in the way of procuring one, either by purchase or gift?'

Crestadoro was enthusiastic in meeting the Committee's policy to collect local material, which was established in the early days. The Letter Books mirror his pouncing on local literature which would otherwise vanish. In the case of Alderman Davies, a correspondent of 9 July 1877, the request may also be prompted by the need to keep powerful councillors on side: 'I am wishful to obtain for the Reference Library a copy of your pamphlet on Methodism in Salford which I understand has been recently prepared for private or semi-private circulation'.

## Conferences, Exhibitions and Events

Crestadoro advocated the importance of cataloguing conference papers in *The Art of Making Catalogues* and followed this principle in the Reference Library Catalogue. He was keen on collecting conference proceedings, especially when they had a local context. Here is Crestadoro on 11 August 1877: 'I wish to preserve in the Reference library a set of the programmes, circulars and other principal documents that have been issued in connection with the visit of the British Medical Association to Manchester.'

Crestadoro had the foresight to collect ephemera linked with historical events. It would be interesting to know if Manchester still holds the archive he established for the opening of the New Town Hall. Crestadoro wrote to the Mayor of Manchester on 17 September 1877 as follows:

> With the view of preserving in the Reference Library an historical memorial of the occasion of opening the New Town Hall, I am desirous of making a collection of the printed documents referring thereto.
>
> I therefore beg to ask you if you will kindly favour the Committee by giving directions for a copy of every circular, ticket, form, placard, bill of fare, programme or other printed papers associated with the banquet, ball, procession, to be sent to the Free Library for preservation.

The Letter Books show how keen Crestadoro was to collect any material associated with significant local events in Manchester, to build up specific collections and to track down personal or organisational history that might be relevant to the collections. Having received the papers from the Exhibition of Fuel Appliances, he requested the cards of invitation and forms used to complete the archive.[475] He was unusually perceptive of the rarity of such ephemera.

## Official Publications

Crestadoro was assiduous in demanding the right of the Free Libraries to have copies of government documents now termed Official Publications, and quite rightly too. Sadly, this was never recognised, and to this day only the six Legal Deposit libraries receive them.

Thomas Baker, as Chair of the Committee, even consulted solicitors to see how the issue might be pursued. Crestadoro used any influential contact he had to get hold of official material. The cotton manufacturer, President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and liberal politician Thomas Bazley (later knighted), a Manchester MP from 1858 to 1880 had retired from Lancashire to Gloucestershire but Crestadoro remained in touch over items for the Free Library. This is Bazley's letter dated 25 August 1873 addressed from Lyford Park, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire. The informal tone suggests a good relationship between them:

> Before leaving London on the … of the Parliamentary Session I ordered my Public Papers to be sent to the Free Library of Manchester, and I am glad to learn that you have received them.
>
> I am sending a few … Works by Fredgold, Buchanan & Barlow for the library,
>
> Thos. Bazley

Both Crestadoro's pride in Manchester Free Libraries and his combative nature when assured of being in the right are evident in his letter to the Registrar General, G Graham Esq., on 20 August 1872: it seems from the opening that the Registrar General had at least given him a sympathetic hearing:

> Sir
>
> I thank you for your reply to my application on behalf of the Manchester Public Free Library and for the expression of your approval of it. With reference to the restrictions placed by the Lords of the Treasury upon the gratuitous issue of your Reports I have nothing to say so far as it affects private distribution but it ought not in my humble opinion, to apply to a public institution like the Manchester Free Library. Your reports are of great permanent value, printed at the expense of the Nation and distributed gratis for public purposes to Members of Parliament and to such Institutions as are used by the Public at large. In this respect our Reference Library stands in the same relation to the North of England as the British Museum to the Metropolis and if your publications were placed on its shelves they would fully ensure the purpose for which they are intended, as they would be widely useful to Readers from the counties of Lancaster, York, Derby and Chester. A set of the publications of the Lords of the Treasury has been recently granted to the Strasburg and Chicago libraries. If the regulations do not forbid the presentation of these public Documents to foreign libraries, they can scarcely be intended to exclude an English Library of such importance as ours.

Here again is the recurring Manchester vision of Campfield being the BM of the north, meaning also that Crestadoro could count himself amongst Panizzi's peers.

As if in retaliation for this refusal of British Government documents, Crestadoro went all out to obtain official publications from the colonies. There is a flurry of his requests to Australia, Barbados, Canada, Jamaica, New Zealand and Trinidad amongst others.[476] Most of these outposts responded generously.

## BM Gifts

Crestadoro was clearly well regarded by Panizzi's successors at the BM; they would have known him from the *British Catalogue* and *The Art of Making Catalogue*s, and he was a scholar, which is always the way to a curator's heart.

He had regular deliveries of duplicate books from the BM and corresponded over particular precious items. James Yates, the combative librarian at Leeds, challenged Crestadoro on this special relationship. Yates himself campaigned unsuccessfully for the free distribution of duplicates, and wrote to the Manchester Free Library Committee in dismay on 23 September 1873 when his efforts were rebuffed:

> You will no doubt have seen in the newspapers the non-success of our application for an equitable distribution of the duplicate works (that is, of the same edition) in the British Museum.
>
> The following replies will serve to show officials shift their grounds in order to negative our position.

Yates included a reply from Winter Jones (Panizzi's successor) affirming that the BM provisions only allowed duplicates to be parted with as sale or exchange. Crestadoro may have received a more generous provision. In several letters to Crestadoro, for example on 26 June 1875, Winter Jones referred to sending the works mentioned as a gift.

## Exchange Agreements

Crestadoro was in regular contact with prestigious libraries in Europe and the United States. Librarians who later became famous and whose names still have meaning today respected him as a peer. Crestadoro liaised with the New York Apprentices Library, the New York Mercantile Library, Boston Public Library and the Smithsonian, sending them copies of the annual reports and catalogues. Charles Cutter wrote to him in 1869 (Letter 69/17) asking for copies of the Manchester catalogues and reports. He had seen them at Harvard College and: 'I have ventures to hope they would extend a similar favour to the Boston Athenaeum which is, as you are perhaps aware, a library of sixty years standing, extensively used by the scholars and gentlemen of Boston. I should be happy to send you our last published catalogue (1840) if you do not already possess it.'

Cutter arranged the details for sending the catalogues and reports, requesting Crestadoro to send them via their agent, E. R. Allen of 12 Tavistock Row, Covent Garden, London. This type of arrangement explains a category of letters found regularly in the Letter Books; agents handling consignments between Manchester and other libraries both in Britain and overseas. Libraries acted on behalf of other institutions, for example, the Secretary of the New York State Library, J. R. Woolworth, sent material from the Smithsonian to Crestadoro: 'I am also instructed by the Trustees of the Library to say that they will be gratified to do all in their power to make exchanges mutually satisfactory.'[477]

Crestadoro handled much complex business with publishers and agents. A typical letter on 8 May 1877 is from Crestadoro to Messrs Sampson Low at 188 Fleet Street: 'At the request of Mr Shwartz of the New York Apprentices Library I have forwarded (per parcel delivery & prepaid) a parcel for him to your care, for enclosure to G.P. Putnan & Son, New York. May I ask you to receive the parcel and to acknowledge its arrival, per enclosed postcard.'

Crestadoro's reputation was critical in setting up these valuable exchanges, and he seems to have

engaged people all over the world, sending out Manchester reports and catalogues and getting material in exchange. The Russian Consulate General sent his copy of the Manchester Reference Catalogue to the Pulkowa Astronomical Observatory, commenting in the letter of January 1865, that large parcels cannot be sent before the opening of navigation in May but small ones can be forwarded. The choice of Pulkowa Observatory must be because of the amount of science and technology in the Catalogue. It would be interesting to know whether the Catalogue survived through all the disasters that have since befallen the Observatory and its library.

## Theatre

Manchester Libraries are rightly proud of their Theatre Collection, which brings together a huge range of material on Manchester theatres from eighteenth century to contemporary. Playbills, posters, newspaper cuttings, scrapbooks, manuscripts, books, periodicals and ephemera have all been carefully collected, organised by individual theatre and beautifully bound. As is described on the site: 'It has been built up from the beginnings of the public library service in Manchester and continues to this day.'[478]

Crestadoro can be credited with starting this imaginative venture for a Birmingham dealer wrote to him on 10 July 1867 offering to sell some 'very curious and interesting' bills as: 'Mr Sutton/ Bookseller Oxford, informs me you are forming a Collection of old Manchester Play Bills.'

News of his interest must have spread. Sarah Ann Wall, in ill health and poverty in Southport, offered him the ancient playbills from her deceased father and brother's collection for a few shillings: 'I do not like them lying in a chest'. There were also tracts and pamphlets on offer too; her father and brother had been printers and booksellers with whom Crestadoro had previous dealings.

Crestadoro's innovative cataloguing treatment of plays was, as mentioned previously, praised by Cutter and is further evidence of his particular interest.

In addition, Crestadoro had good relationships with the theatrical managers, and their letters first make an appearance in the Letter Books when he becomes Chief Librarian.

Crestadoro supplied material urgently needed for theatre performances, anything from natural history illustrations for *The Frogs*, a copy of *Graville's Animated Flowers*, books on Theseus or Venice, to illustrations of Turkish scenes. Charles Calvert, the Shakespearean revivalist, sent in regular requests as scribbled notes from The Princes Theatre. Even Miss Charles Calvert begged him for material for her recitations.[479] Mr. Hughes, of The New Queen's Theatre, asked for similar favours.

Crestadoro was able to supply answers for queries on music, as a letter from John Towers indicates. The Manchester newspapers identify Mr. and Mrs. John Towers as giving popular music performances, sometimes for charity. The couple were clearly a feature on the Manchester musical scene. John Towers wrote to Crestadoro on 27 August 1878 thanking him for information on Forkel (presumably the German musician and musicologist Johann Forkel), for sending a 'most valuable and reliable book' and for 'thinking of me'.

Theatres, musical performances, literary lectures would all have been the context of the circles in which Crestadoro moved and there is a degree of warmth and familiarity in the notes he received from theatrical managers that suggests he enjoyed their entertainments.

Tickets came his way; the request for *Punch* from the New Queens' Theatre, Bridge Street, (Letter

41/73 1873) mentions: ‘Accompanying this is a complimentary ticket’.[480]

## Politics

Crestadoro, with his liberal views, his bequest for the education of women in Genoa and with his record for employing women in libraries, was supportive of women’s suffrage. On 13 June 1872, he wrote to Lydia Becker, the founding member of the Manchester Women’s Suffrage Committee, in a style that suggests they were on good terms:

> Mr Crestadoro presents his compliments to Miss Becker and would feel obliged if she would kindly let him have a copy of the Women’s Suffrage Journal for May 1870 and January 1871 to complete the Reference Library copy for binding.

Lydia Becker was a prominent figure in Manchester and with her interests in science, education and the National Association for the Advancement of Social Science, would have encountered Crestadoro at a number of venues.

Crestadoro corresponded with a Miss Thomas of the Society of Women’s Suffrage and was glad, with the Committee’s approval (7 November 1877): ‘to accept the publications for their several libraries.’

The approach of Crestadoro and the Committee was to be as neutral as possible on politics. Even so, this was a delicate area and any gap in coverage could cause complaint. On 12 November 1869, the Constitutional Association Harpurhey, Moston, Blackley, and Lower Crumpsall Branch pointed out the: ‘marked scarcity of Conservative newspapers and periodicals in the Free Libraries of this city – especially considering the great abundance of liberal and Roman Catholic organs.’

There is a long letter from a representative of the Home Rule Council requesting that the weekly *United Irishman* should be placed on the library tables. The writer argues his case on two grounds. Firstly that the English need to read for themselves the political aims of the organization and make informed opinions. Secondly that:‘the thousands of Irishmen who visit the Free Libraries weekly, I might say daily, may have the same facilities afforded them of reading the passing events from an Irish National point of view as the English and Scotch have of reading the views favourable to each of their Nationalities?’

He awaits the decision: ‘trusting to the spirit of fair play which has hitherto characterized the proceedings of the Manchester Free Library Committee’.

The Committee (Sub Committee October 1874) decided that the *United Irishman* was extreme in its views, sympathised with Fenian prisoners and advocated Home Rule ‘in its widest sense’ but concluded that the offer should be accepted; which does speak volumes for their sense of fair play.

Even so, there was uneasiness about displaying inflammatory literature and certain titles were declined. Martin Hewitt noted that the Committee stopped taking donations of *The Reasoner,* a secular journal in 1854 and as usual kept this quiet, not recording the decision in the official minutes for the Council. Its successor the *National Reformer* was banned in 1872 but admitted in 1878. As far as possible the Committee was on the side of allowing all opinions a hearing.

Neither the Committee nor Crestadoro would allow the Libraries to be used for publicity. The 27 April 1870 Minutes record that the Chairman read out a letter he had received from Miss Wolstenholme of Congleton, offering a dozen copies of pamphlets on the Contagious Diseases Act to be on the newsroom tables. Crestadoro was instructed to write to Miss Wolstenholme respectfully declining the offer. Crestadoro even refused Julia Gaskell her wish to place handbills

for the Ardwick and Ancoats Kitchen on the tables. Following his report, the Committee decided on 30 April 1873 that it was: 'undesirable to make the Libraries advertising mediums for any purpose whatever.'

## Books for the Blind

In the UK the RNIB Library provides a free library service for people with sight loss. Behind this lies a history of different attempts at provision dating back into the nineteenth century, and key reformers were involved. William Shaen, for instance, was an active member of the Board of the Royal Normal College for the Blind.

Local institutions for the blind, charities, churches, specific schools and even some workhouses were involved in education, teaching the blind to read and providing texts, though these were often limited to the scriptures. Edward Rushton, blind poet and revolutionary, founded the first school for the blind in Liverpool and inspired with his example.

Against this background it is not surprising that the Free Libraries supported blind readers. Only a small number of texts could be provided with the result the blind readers had nothing new to keep them coming to the libraries and thus were often perceived as not interested. Or as John Pink mentioned, the number of blind readers was so small that: 'the supply of new books had ceased'[481].

I cannot trace any policy discussion concerning blind readers in the Manchester Archive. According to Thomas Kelly: 'The provision of books for the blind seems to have begun at Liverpool in 1857 on the initiative of R. W. Roulston, Superintendent of the Lending Libraries. Manchester followed suit in 1863.'[482]

In fact, Manchester included a mention of books for the blind in the 1862 annual report and in Crestadoro's time it appears that reading clubs were also set up. Mr. Bellhouse reports to Crestadoro in October 1865 that he has had five blind readers in six months using Mr. Moon's books, and others also read to them. He does not detail whether these are staff, other readers, or assistants they have brought with them.

On 8 January 1867, D. Conolly of London thanked Crestadoro sending information on the Free Public Libraries and added the following poignant suggestion:

> As I have myself suffered from Blindness for the last 15 years, I naturally feel a somewhat deep interest in the welfare of those who have to bear the same privation and was therefore much pleased to find some embossed books had been provided for Blind readers. It has occurred to me that it would be no misappropriation of a very small portion of the funds at the disposal of the Library committee to provide a reader and room on one or two evenings in the week for the special instruction of the Blind…
>
> If you think the matter worthy of attention, I should feel greatly obliged if you will lay this letter or the substance of it before the Library Committee.

As this letter has survived it is likely that Crestadoro did take the matter forward. There is also a poignant letter that Crestadoro received from a blind reader who was tired of trudging from library to library because the stock was so limited and the items 'not to hand'. Crestadoro also reported this to the Committee.

## Mrs. Moon

One correspondent whom Crestadoro held in high regard was Mrs. Moon, the second wife of the

William Moon who invented an alphabetical type system for the blind as an alternative to the Frere line type. The Moon type was later largely superseded by Braille but it is still in use as some find it easier than Braille. William Moon was blind himself, taught in the Blind School Brighton and printed books, mainly Scriptures in his Moon type. Missionaries used the Moon Bible across the world: the newspapers record many impassioned talks Moon gave on the evangelical aspects of his invention.

On 30 July 1875, Crestadoro wrote to Mrs. Moon at 107 Queens Road, Brighton as follows:

> I have had the privilege of seeing a copy of your interesting volume 'A family memorial' printed for private circulation, 1872 and am tempted to ask if you could spare a copy for preservation in this library. We are wishful to gather all the books illustrating the history of Manchester and its distinguished men. As your book contains much that is not elsewhere obtainable concerning a very prominent and well remembered public man, the gift would be… to the Committee and a noticeable addition to the library.

Mrs. Moon responded warmly and sent the book. She reminisced about the comfort the Library brought to her father and herself: 'It gives me great pleasure to accede to your request for a copy of my little book for the Manchester Library, where my beloved Father & myself often went to select books in former happy days.'

Mrs. Moon was Anna Maria Elsdale; she was the granddaughter of the composer, William Leeves, and her father, Rev. Robinson Elsdale, was incumbent of Stretford and High Master of Manchester Free Grammar School, hence Crestadoro's interest. The little memorial book[483] is mainly about her grandfather but contains several poems written by her father and letters from those he had taught, including W. Harrison Ainsworth. William Moon, prompted by this contact with Crestadoro, wrote on 14 August 1875 to donate copies of each of his works 'written upon the blind'.

Mrs. Moon and Crestadoro are still in touch two years later: he thanked her warmly for two copies of a memorial (this must be the additional one she wrote on the death of her mother[484]), one copy of which Crestadoro placed in a branch library and the other he forwarded as requested to James Crossley for Chetham's (Letter 800 12 June 1877). Mrs. Moon was staying at Miss Hardy's, The Mount, Bakewell, Derbyshire as Crestadoro informs Crossley, so he can send a receipt. The transaction may seem trivial but it indicates an important sharing; Crestadoro was on significantly good terms with two highly respected personages.

## Entrepreneur and Scholar

Crestadoro introduced more analysis of the collection into the annual reports. In his first report he displayed pride in the recent purchase of rare items:

> Caxton's Golden Legend, first edition; Drayton's Poems, first edition, of which only two copies are known exist; Blume's Flora Javre; Dibdin's Specimen Bibliothecae;, with numerous valuable MS. additions by the distinguished author and poet, of Liverpool, and William Ford, the well-known bookseller of Manchester Pope's Works, first edition; Jobbins's Polygraphia Curioa, Pinkerton's Medallic History of England, numerous other works, which have considerably enhanced the character of the collection.

He brought his talents, both as an entrepreneur and as a scholar, to bear on how best to enrich the collections despite the limited budget.

His reputation as a scholar and his courtesy brought him offers from unlikely sources. For example,

a J. Johnson, Artist, wrote to him on 30 August 1874 with no preamble, suggesting they are on familiar terms: 'There is a Cottager at this place who has a fine copy of 'Resources Diverses de M Pierre Bayle a la Hage 1737- 4 Vols Folio. If it is anything in your way he will be glad to take any reasonable price to be fixed by yourself'. (Perhaps this was the John Johnson who sponsored Crestadoro's naturalisation.)

## 'No book can be undesirable'

Nottingham Free Libraries consulted Crestadoro on the value of purchasing *Bayles Dictionary* on 23 February 1870. In a draft reply on the same day Crestadoro stated that in his opinion: 'no book can be undesirable on account of its date in a library intended to supply all wants.'

This dictum is reflected in the rare books of the Manchester collections, many purchased in Crestadoro's time. Crestadoro corresponded regularly with experts on particular valuable copies. He took pride in the Manchester collection and on 6 February 1873, wrote with the acerbity that was usually reserved for the Post Office or Rigby & Sons, to W. Blades Esq of 11 Alchurch Lane, London:

> Sir
>
> In your very interesting little work 'How to tell a Caxton' you remark (s.29) that 'no-one could expect to find a Caxton on the shelves of Mudies, the Library Company, or any of the numerous and useful Free Libraries lately established.
>
> I am at a loss to know why Town Libraries should not contain old and rare books, and I think you will be pleased to learn that one Free Library, at least, possessed a Caxton. We have here a fragment of Caxton's first edition of Voragine's Golden Legend. Out of the 444 leaves of the complete work we only have 141 and some of these are imperfect. The spaces for initials have been filled up in red ink. When the work was purchased it was examined and collated for us by the British Museum Authorities and bound by Mr. Luckett. The Imperfections make description difficult.

William Blades, eminent printer, bibliophile and Caxton expert must have overlooked this letter for he contacted Crestadoro on 14 January 1874 (Letter 43/69) in some excitement: 'A friend informed me yesterday that he had seen a veritable copy of Caxton's Golden Legend in your library. Is this so? & if so shall I be infringing too much on your time by asking you to give me a collation of it?'

Crestadoro's reputation as an expert collector enabled him to be alerted to possible purchases ahead of others. An Ipswich Tract dealer, J. Read, for example, offered him first view of a rare collection, and on 13 December 1873 sent a chest of thirty volumes of tracts, reports and papers collected by a Sir John Sinclair. He only charged a minimal price and included some very rare tracts as a donation: 'many of these old volumes contain very curious matter' because of his admiration for Crestadoro. He had expressed this in his letter of 3 March 1873: 'I remember when your catalogue of the reference library first came out and purchased a copy - and was very much pleased at the manner in which you spoke of the value of the pamphlets and the careful way in which you catalogued them.'

## Donations

As described earlier, the Free Libraries were at first dependant on donations and money gifts for their book-stock. Donations were a mixed bag. It was necessary to weed out poor material and even then results were unpredictable. Edwards wrote: 'donation of books can never be expected (under

common circumstances) to accomplish much towards the formation of a good Consulting Library.'[485]

As far as he could, Crestadoro tried to control donations by approaching suitable donors, by making deals to obtain free material, and by encouraging the Committee to leave the first stage of selection in his hands.

Donations were submitted to the Committee who censored what they deemed to be unsuitable books. As Crestadoro explained to an enquirer on 18 October 1877: 'There are no conditions attaching to the receipt of books by the Committee. If there is nothing absolutely immoral in the works which are presented they usually circulate them.'

From the start, Crestadoro was entrusted with the first check of donations before passing them to the Committee. On 21 December 1864, the Rochdale Road Branch Librarian Mr. Bellhouse, wrote to a colleague concerning donations from a Mr. Meynell: 'I agree with some of your remarks about the suitability of them, and leave the adoption and selection to Mr. Crestadoro.' Joseph Thompson from Pin Mill, Ardwick, much admired Crestadoro's catalogue and requested him to look at 1,000 books he wanted to donate to Ancoats before offering them to the Committee. This was on May 16 1867.

Crestadoro was confident enough to let donors know that their gifts would be catalogued. For example, in accepting 'a valuable present' of volumes on astronomy and metrology from an Alfred M. Box Esq. of Acomb, York, he comments on 6 March 1877: 'I shall have much pleasure in reporting this gift to the Committee at their next meeting and will take care that the works are duly entered in the Reference Library Catalogue.'

Crestadoro was shrewd in making this last point: donors like their gifts to be given priority in cataloguing.

Donations from professionals with particular interests enabled Campfield to be strong in specific areas, if not the overall discipline. Although weak in medical literature, Campfield received books on childbirth from an eminent local physician, Thomas Radford, including ones he wrote. On 9 December 1878, he sent in his work *On the inhalation of Ether during labour*. Thomas Radford endowed a library and museum at St. Mary's Hospital for Women where he was Consulting Physician and Board Chairman and his archives are now with the Manchester Medical Sciences Collection. Other letters in the Manchester Archive show he worked with Crestadoro on such matters as Hospital Funds and individual cases of illness and hardship, so their friendship may well have been a factor in the donation.

Looking through the jumbled business of the Letter Books it appears that, as well as selecting suitable donations, Crestadoro was also successful in persuading people or organisations to donate.

Manchester's reputation brought in donations from people and institutions outside the city; a Jane Bourchier (Lady Bourchier) of Hampton Court Palace offered copies of her father's memoirs she had edited, wanting a safe home for the work (28 June 1875). She also gave copies to the Royal Collection and the BM, so she obviously thought highly of Manchester Free Libraries as another recipient.

Some offers to Manchester fall between donations and purchases. Crestadoro tended to negotiate to get material for free when possible or if not at a low price. One of the most amazing letters I came across in the Manchester Archive is from the French historian Alphonse Gallery recounting at length the journals he collected during the Franco-Prussian War and the Siege of Paris in 1870 to

1871. He had intended to write a history of the Siege with his relative, General Renault, but the General had been killed at Champigny. He offered the collection to Manchester but was not interested in money alone. Was it Crestadoro's European reputation, both political and literary, that drew this historian to offer this rare collection? Other letters in the Manchester Archive indicate Crestadoro's interest in this period in France.

The only two letters from Crestadoro in the BL Archives Department of Printed Books relate to this offer. In a letter dated 16 December 1878, he consulted Edward Bond, Principal Librarian at the BM, on purchase of material relating to the Siege of Paris and the Commune. The letter is annotated by George Bullen, Keeper of Printed Books, showing that he replied: 'The price asked is very reasonable.' Crestadoro wrote back thanking him for: 'for your kind and prompt reply to my inquiry concerning the journals published in Paris during the Siege and the Commune', adding that: 'the Committee have decided to make the purchase'.

His thoroughness with obtaining advice from the BM would have done much to help him gain the Committee's approval for this significant addition to Manchester's collection.

## Booksellers

The Letter Books testify to Crestadoro's regular contacts with booksellers, organisations and individuals. His knowledge of the book trade from his years working with Sampson Low would have been invaluable. Like many other librarians he corresponded with the likes of the famous Bernard Quaritch in London, but he did not neglect Manchester booksellers. (Quaritch even wrote to Crestadoro on 6 January 1876 complaining of his lack of orders.) He dealt frequently with Mr. Thomas Sutton, a well-respected bookseller in Manchester, whom he often recommended to correspondents. Thomas Sutton's own love of books was evidenced by two of his sons following his example: the bookseller Richard H. Sutton and the librarian Charles W. Sutton, Crestadoro's deputy and successor. It was kind of Crestadoro to give Thomas Sutton a boost for potential business. It was both kindness and the value of his books that motivated Crestadoro to purchase material from the struggling Edward Edwards who wrote to him in gratitude on 28 July 1871.

Crestadoro delighted in reporting bargains to the Committee; his pride in snatching good items for the Manchester collections at low cost is palpable. For example, reporting on purchases on 19 May 1865, Crestadoro refers to the 'extremely low price' of one purchase that included a collection of Liverpool playbills and then: 'no. 1 which cost 3/6 is reported in "Loundes" to fetch £2.7'.

The Letter Books have several instances of unsolicited recommendations, amongst them the amusing note of 23 January 1879 from Charles Ward, a Manchester printer, to Crestadoro that the *Fishing Gazette* has changed hands and is much improved: 'Hitherto it has been the organ of the gentlemen who sit on canal banks fishing for kettles etc.'

## Housekeeping

As might be expected Crestadoro would not accept poor service and this forms another category in his collection activities. For example, he writes to a Mr. Channing on November 7 1877, when one of the books in a delivery arrives damaged:

> One of the books in the parcel from the British Museum which I have received from you this morning, has received considerable damage in transit, in consequence of defective packing, the corners having been bent and crushed and the cloth on one side scarred.
>
> I should be obliged if in future you could take particular care in packing the books for us,

> particularly from the British Museum. If necessary, you may procure boxes or boards, and any extra expense you may charge on the bill.

Another activity of Crestadoro's was checking what agents had sent and to have procedures for chasing up missing copies. In the case of newspapers any delay meant the copies might be already be unobtainable. On 22 February 1877, Crestadoro contacts the publisher of the *London Gazette*:

> Our London Gazette are sent to us by post from London, but a few of the numbers have never reached us, and the agent now says he is quite unable to procure them and advises me to apply direct to you.
>
> We are wishful to keep our file unbroken and I should therefore feel obliged if you could furnish us with the missing nos of which I append a list, or inform me how we could get them.

The next letter, 744, shows that Crestadoro's efforts were immediately successful. The importance of having a complete run was emphasized in Axon's Handbook:

> another storehouse for the illustration of our history is the London Gazette. It is doubtful whether a copy so perfect as that possessed by the Manchester Free Reference Library exists elsewhere. Neither the British Museum nor the Bodleian at Oxford can claim that distinction. From its first issue in 1665 to the present day it has been the official depository of government proclamations, state papers, and so forth.[486]

## Other Manchester Collections

There was a whole network of private libraries in Manchester, and this might well have been a factor in how Manchester chose to develop the collections.

For example, law might have been lightly covered, as the Manchester Law Library was nearby. This was founded in 1820 and is still in existence today, but as a private subscription library it was exclusive to members. The Campfield collection appears to have been of little use for those who wished to have up to date information according to one reader's complaint dated 16 June 1875: 'the law Books you have are OLD & ANTIQUATED – most of the Laws they treat of are Either Altered or Abolished'.

The Manchester Law Library had a rigorous policy of keeping its collection up to date and networked with the other libraries for exchange of material. Crestadoro sent copies of the reports and catalogues to the Law Library. Yet it does not appear that the Law Library reciprocated, judging by this: 'The Society had always maintained cordial relations with the various other libraries in Manchester and had given free copies of its catalogues to Owen's College, Chetham's Library and the Portico Library'.[487]

## Co-operation

The other side of collecting is giving and Crestadoro and the Committee were generous in gifts to other Free Libraries. On 5 January 1876, John MacLauchan of Dundee wrote in gratitude for a copy of M. Menier's *Theorie et Application de l'Emport* and the first number of *La Reform Economique*. He added a chatty postscript to Crestadoro ending with a graceful and interesting compliment: 'Some day I hope to see our youthful library in Dundee attain to the same standard of taste which characterizes your older established Library in Manchester.'

As with cataloguing and dealing with overdue books, other librarians sought Crestadoro's opinion

on collecction development and in return he offered very practical advice, which now is valuable historically as a view of how these first collections were developed. On 25 October 24 1877, he sent a copy of the Reference Library Catalogue and a letter to a E. H. Enfield of the Nottingham Mechanics' Institution:

> In making up the lists for your library of Reference it would be worth your while to consult an article on 'Works of Reference for a Library' by Mr. Spofford, Librarian of Congress in the 'Special Report on Public Libraries in the United States, 1876, pp 686-710, which you will no doubt find in the Nottingham Free Library. He gives a useful list of about 600 works of reference. You might also consult Perkins 'Best Reading' (Low 7/6).
>
> There is a bookseller in this City, Mr. Sutton, who has considerable experience in the preparation of lists for Public Libraries, & he, no doubt, could, on application, furnish you with a list of suitable books with the lowest prices at which they could be obtained.

Manchester speedily responded to the appeal for the Strasbourg Library, destroyed in the siege of 1870.[488] When the Birmingham Central Library was destroyed by fire in 1879, the Committee and Crestadoro immediately responded by sending: 'such duplicate books as would be suitable for the formation of a new library' (Minutes of 3 February 1879).

## Scale

Statistics alone do not prove value but it is worth noting that when Crestadoro came in as Chief Librarian his remit covered Campfield Reference Library and three lending branches, Campfield, Ancoats and Rochdale Road. Two more branches were added. He was responsible for ensuring the development of all these branch collections as well as the catalogues to describe them.

The stock held at the Reference Library was around 31,604 volumes in 1861-1862 with 127,669 recorded requests. By 1878 -1879 there were 61,171 books with 173,137 recorded requests. Requests shot up from 63,957 recorded for the previous year, reflecting the change from the difficult Campfield site to the Old Town Hall. Crestadoro had achieved growth of both collection and use throughout his time, despite innumerable challenges and difficulties.

[460] Crestadoro, Catalogue of the Books, p.vii

[461] University of Manchester Library (hereafter UML). Papers of W.E.A. Axon 69

[462] Edwards, *Free Town Libraries*, p.68

[463] Munford, *Edward Edwards,* p.109

[464] Alfred Lord Tennyson, pseud. Merlin, *The Third of February 1852*, *The Examiner* (7 February 1852)

[465] Munford, *Penny Rate*, p.85

[466] Axon, *Handbook of the Public Libraries*, p.100

[467] Axon, *Handbook of the Public Libraries*, pp. 162-176

[468] Edwards *Free Town Libraries*, p.81

[469] Edwards, *Free Town Libraries*, p.84

[470] Credland, *The Manchester Free Libraries*, p.97

[471] MA, In Letter 7/139

[472] MA, In Letter 71/162

[473] Hewitt, 'Confronting the modern city', p.69

[474] MA, Out Letter 839 to Charles Hardwick, 23 August 1877

[475] MA, In Letter 45/31

[476] MA, In Letter 43/121

[477] MA, In Letter 42/28

[478] www.manchester.gov.uk/info/447/rare_books_and_collections/334/theatre_collection#f

[479] MA, In Letter 40/73

[480] MA, In Letter 41/73

[481] John Pink, *After Fifty Years*, p. 6

[482] Kelly, *A History of Public Libraries*, p.80

[483] Anna Maria Elsdale Moon, *A Family Memorial, etc. [An account of the Rev. W. Leeves and his family.],* (Brighton: Printed for private circulation, 1872

[484] Anna Maria Elsdale Moon, *A Collection of Miscellaneous Writings* (Brighton: Privately printed: 1873)

[485] Edwards, *Free Town Libraries*, p.46

[486] Axon, *Handbook of the Public Libraries,* p.106

[487] Brenda Scragg*, Manchester Law Library,* (Manchester, Portico Library, 2003) p.24

[488] UML, Papers of W.E.A.Axon 342

# Chapter Eighteen: Librarians Unite

> ‘I am glad to find that interest is being taken in London in the subject of Public Libraries for so far it seems scarcely to have appreciated the great advantages to be derived from them.’ Crestadoro[489]

## Professional Networking

As can be seen from Crestadoro’s letters, there was a substantial network of pioneering librarians. They came largely from the industrial towns and cities, reflecting the main territories of the Free Libraries. In addition, there was contact across America and Europe with similar exchange of ideas, experiences and material.

Innumerable debates on professional matters weave through the entire correspondence of the Manchester Library Letters, evidence of how many librarians wanted to make the most of their new roles and how frequently they turned to Crestadoro for his opinions. The list of Crestadoro’s correspondence with established or would be Free Libraries reads like a Bradshaw Guide: Birmingham, Blackpool, Burslem, Cambridge, Cardiff, Darlington, Doncaster, Dundalk, Dundee, Kidderminster, Leeds, Liverpool, London (Guildhall), Newcastle, Newport, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Prestwich, Salford, Wigan, Wolverhampton and York amongst them.

There were hints of some resentment at Manchester’s position, from Liverpool, Salford and Wigan, but generally even a major figure such as Mullins at Birmingham expressed his gratitude: ‘We have had the pleasure of knowing and following with advantage many of the arrangements of the Manchester Free Library.’[490]

As the profession of librarianship developed, the need for accredited representation and training

becoming apparent. America led the way with conferences of librarians in 1853 and 1876. Librarians from overseas were invited to attend the 1876 Conference of Librarians held in Philadelphia during the Centennial Exposition there.

The U.S. Bureau of Education sent invitations to the UK librarians but only James Yates of Leeds accepted. In the words of R. D. MacLeod:

> The invitation had also been sent out to librarians in other lands; but, quite extraordinarily, Yates was the only foreign librarian to attend; the sole British representative.
>
> Why the librarian of Leeds should have been the only British representative one can't say. Panizzi had been invited to the New York Conference of 1853, and had expressed at length the hope of being present; but his pompous successor at the British Museum in 1876 and the English university library set of the time are not on record, so far as we know, as having even sent letters of good wishes to the 1876 Conference promoters.[491]

John Eaton, the Commissioner of the Washington Bureau of Education, had, naturally, invited Crestadoro. Crestadoro's reply on 18 August 1876 is illuminating on two counts. The first is the incredible number of contacts he can call on; it would be difficult to rival this even with online communication. The second is his sadness at not travelling to America:

> I have received your letter and package, and have had great pleasure in distributing the circulars according to your request.
>
> I have forwarded copies to 77 gentlemen officially connected with public libraries in this country, besides about 30 to gentlemen not so connected or to editors of periodicals who I thought likely to take an interest in the Conference. I have also sent to about fifty libraries on the continent of Europe, and some to the Italian Minister of Education.
>
> My best wishes go with the promotion of the Library Conference, from which I have every hope that much good will result.
>
> Had I been a younger man nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to have been with you,

The birth of the ALA dates from the Conference meeting that ended on 6 October 1876. James Yates might have been a difficult and irascible character but in America he received the honour of being elected as Vice-President of the ALA. He formed warm friendships there, not least with the young but powerful Melvil Dewey. Yates wrote on his departure: 'Your reception has been so genial that I leave with the feeling of parting from friends I have known for months instead of days, & shall often look back with pleasure to the hours we have spent together, and anticipate the time for such another reunion.'[492]

## The North versus London

In response to the ALA, British librarians organised their very first Conference of Librarians, held in London in the first week of October 1877. Crestadoro played a part in the murky politics behind the scenes. There were divisions between northern cities and London, between the academic and the Free Libraries. Crestadoro was in the midst of this. He showed himself fully committed to his adopted city.

The Letter Books reveal the usual feuds, mistrust and manoeuverings that blight organisations and movements. Mr. Cowell, the librarian of Liverpool Free Library, wrote to Crestadoro on 6 March 1877 with his concerns:

> I understand from Mr Nicholson's letter in the 'Athenaeum' that you have signified your willingness to cooperate towards making the proposed conference of librarians un fait accompli. Individually I am quite satisfied about the utility of such a meeting but not overpleased respecting the cut + dried way the whole business & preliminaries is being arranged for as in the 'country' by one or two persons in London.
>
> May I ask whether you have consulted in the matter of president & vice-president & whether you entirely acquiesce in all that has so far been done?

Crestadoro had a mole in London who we shall encounter again in the final chapter, Joseph Radford. He was a loyal member of Crestadoro's staff at Campfield, moving to the Free Public Library at Westminster as Librarian in 1876. He was not happy in London and always stayed in touch with his old Chief and friend. On 18 April 1877 he sent Crestadoro inside information on the planning for the conference. Radford had been invited to a meeting of librarians at the London Institution and was appointed onto the Committee of Organisation.

He reported his concerns to Crestadoro; E. B. W Nicholson was clearly driving the plans, prompted by the late American conference. Nicholson had declared that he had written support from the Chief Librarians of the principal Free Libraries, including Crestadoro's. Radford wanted to check if this were true, for he felt opinions were divided. He thought the report in *The Times* was a fair statement but probably 'emanates from Mr. Nicholson'.

It says much of the trust Radford placed in Crestadoro that he could openly confess his concerns and doubts:

> I trust you will pardon me for saying that I think all officers of Free Libraries should be careful in their communication to Mr Nicholson until he places before them the definitive wishes and proposals of the organizing Cttee. If the conference does not take place it is certain that those who are concerned in the management of libraries, maintained under the Free Libraries Act, will act well by a cautious action in the advocacy of their individual interest and the well being of the institutions under their care.

Nicholson was at that time the dynamic librarian of the London Institution, which he had transformed. In 1882 he became librarian at the Bodleian where he fatally failed to get on with the governing body of the Bodley curators. Munford summed him with the comment: 'The highly successful manager of a small library may yet mismanage a large one.'[493]

Crestadoro shared Radford's letter with Mr. Cowell at Liverpool, and he replied on 21 April 1877 with some anger about London interference and appreciative words for Crestadoro:

> I unhesitatingly say that if I had any inkling from you or Mr Mullins that you were not perfectly satisfied by the course of action taken by Mr N of London, at the time I write you, I would have certainly stayed aloof, as I shall do now, if I have any reason to think that London is, that we should play second fiddle, act chorus, clap our hands to say hear! hear! to a few apparently self-elected in London when they deliver themselves no doubt to their own admiration. Without wishing to flatter, there are few who can speak with more authority than yourself. Mr Mullins can put in a weighty claim to be heard, your humble servant has had now nearly 25 years in library work & has gleaned a few grains of experience and there are others of our craft who are not without reason or commonsense to speak individually & who could give a good account of themselves & their work when opportunity afforded. My own feelings are that this Conference is premature. I'd have preferred waiting a bit so as not to give very much the appearance of following in the

> wake of the Yankees. Of course I cannot say a word against its utility taken per se etc. etc. Mr Radford's letter half confirms my previous suspicions & I don't intend to be patronized

In his next letter, Radford wrote that a circular on the conference would be coming out, that Yates was to read a paper and commented that: 'Mr Nicholson appears to be impressed with a sense of Mr Yates importance. I hope Mr N and Mr Y will not do too much.'[494] (It was said of Nicholson that 'if he could not have a finger in every corner of the pie he preferred to keep his finger out of it'[495] so there was reason to be wary.)

## Outcome of the Conference of Librarians

Despite all these misgivings, the Conference of Librarians, held in London in October 1877, was a success. It was at the last session that the LA was founded. Members of the Council included some representation of the Free Libraries; Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds. Crestadoro represented Manchester and Axon too was on the Council as Secretary of the Manchester Literary Club and as a recognised moving force in librarianship. An old friend of Crestadoro's, the man who had endorsed him as a reader at the BM, W.S. Vaux was also on the Council. He was now Librarian of the Royal Asiatic Society. But none of the Free Librarians held officer positions of Treasurer and Secretary: that was all London

Mullins, writing to Crestadoro from the Central Free Library, Birmingham, on 17 October just after the conference, was full of praise for Nicholson:

> I trust that you reached home safe and well from the Conference and none but pleasant reminiscences of the same. I found it pleasant and sufficiently fatiguing.
>
> The only matter on which I have heard complaint is that the valuable services of Mr. Nicholson, whose energy and labour really brought about the Conference was not quite adequately recognized.
>
> It has been proposed to take up a subscription of 5/- and present him with a gold watch. Will you join in this?
>
> Mr Harrison of the London Library, Mr Overall of the Guildhall & Mr Cowell of Liverpool are willing to join in.

Nicholson had done well to win over his suspicious colleagues and the path was set for the LA.

Not all were convinced. John Pink of Cambridge Free Libraries had become one of Crestadoro's friends. Highly respected by his colleagues he pioneered services for children and uniquely ran the library as open access. As Munford describes: 'he was one of the ablest and most conscientious of the early public librarians.' He had pioneered co-operation through the exchange of catalogues and reports, explaining to Crestadoro in December 1863: 'I think by doing so we may become better acquainted with the various Free Libraries.'

He wrote to Crestadoro on 22 January 1878:

> Respecting your new Library Association - it appears at present to be designed for the librarians of our larger libraries & I have heard complaint that too much prominence was given to that portion of the delegates at the conference most particularly to the American visitors to the exclusion and little snubbing to the remainder.
>
> I have not subscribed yet (nor indeed have I been solicited) nor shall I till I see it is for the mutual benefit of all sections of libraries.

Eventually John Pink became persuaded of the value of the LA and joined. The annual conference was held in Cambridge in 1883 to celebrate the jubilee year of the Free Library there. John Pink gave a paper entitled *The Cambridge Public Free Library, its Rise and Progress*.

## American Visitors

Distinguished American colleagues had travelled to Britain to attend the Conference of Librarians. One of their number, Samuel Swett Green (mentioned in Chapter Three in connection with Bancroft), recorded a humorous account of their journey. These distinguished American colleagues, Dewey amongst them, were elected to Honorary membership. For a time, both Associations shared a publication, *The Journal.*

A note from Crestadoro records their visit to Manchester: this was in the traumatic period of the move to the Old Town Hall:

> Sept 1877
>
> Gent
>
> The Chief Librarian begs to report that the following American librarians visited the Library on Monday evening.
>
> Justin Winsor
> Miss Anne R Godfrey
> William F Poole
> Chas A Cutter
> Fredx Jackson
> Samuel S Green
> Charles Evans
> Melvil Dewey
> J O W Rodgers
>
> They were shown the room which is being prepared for the Reference Library, & were taken to Hulme and Chorlton Branches and they expressed themselves pleased with the crowded state of the newsrooms and the number of readers.

The Committee recognised the significance of this visit: the full names and establishments where they were librarians are listed in the Minutes. In library history terms these are the gods; Poole, Cutter and Dewey in particular are still recognised names today, if only through the systems bearing their names.

Samuel Swett Green recorded the event himself so we see both sides of the coin:

> At Manchester, Andrea Crestadoro, librarian of the Public Free Libraries, and his assistant and successor, C. W. Sutton, greeted us heartily and did their best in trying to answer a flood of questions. It was a surprise to us to see a great reading-room filled in the evening by readers all with their hats on. Two things that seemed strange to American librarians were the shelving of rooms found almost everywhere carried high up on the walls, the books on which were reached by ladders moving on an iron rod placed above the reach of the arm and the absence of women serving as attendants in libraries.[496]

Perhaps it was Dewey who was shocked by the hats. Later on, he certainly banned his readers from wearing them: ‘They were told not to use tobacco, wear hats, put their feet on chairs or tables, or litter the premises.’[497] As we shall see Manchester did have women assistants, presumably just not

visible on the day.

## Dewey Decimal Classification

As mentioned in Chapter Thirteen, the connections between Dewey, Crestadoro, Axon and Sutton resulted in Manchester being the very first in the UK to use DDC, five years earlier than is usually stated in library histories, with Ashton being wrongly attributed as the first.

The *Leeds Mercury* of Saturday, 3 November 1877 records how the enterprising Manchester librarians had seized upon the cutting edge of the new 'decimal' system they had heard about only two months before:

> Professor Crestadoro is completing the index to the catalogue - which latter has been finished for some time, and the sub-librarian and assistants are engaged in reclassifying the whole library in accordance with an American system advocated by Mr. Dewy, of the United States, at the recent conference of librarians. The principle is termed the 'decimal' one, from the circumstance that the books are divided in respect of their subjects into tens, and then sub-divided into as many series of tens as may be required.[498]

But Axon had been before them: 'W.E.A. Axon from Manchester had already, a year after its appearance, used the scheme to classify his own private library.'[499]

The Manchester connections remained strong; letters in the Axon Papers include Axon's later correspondence with Dewey on his articles for *The Library Journal* (Dewey was the editor).[500]

Ever since this time, American librarians have continued to cross the Atlantic to attend the conferences, many of which were and are held in Manchester.

## Crestadoro in the Library Association

Crestadoro had been fairly quiet in the formal proceedings of the first Conference of Librarians. He did not give a paper but in the discussions spoke briefly of cataloguing methods, index catalogues, anonymous books and the recording of issues of patent specifications. All this is familiar territory; but he also added information on library education in Italy:

> Dr. ANDREA CRESTADORO said: - By a recent royal decree in Italy it is ordered that in every National Library (of which there are five) a chair of Librarianship shall be established, to teach and train student in the bibliothecal science, so as to qualify them for appointment in libraries.[501]

There is a view that the driving force for British librarianship came from the next generation, from James Duff Brown, Stanley Jast and Ernest Savage, 'librarians of energy and vision' who 'were able to drag legislators, councillors, fellow librarians, and the public along with them.'[502] The papers from the Conference of Librarians and the following annual conferences of the LA contradict this for there is a palpable energy, excitement and a readiness for change in the speeches and discussions.

What is strange is that despite his position on the Council, Crestadoro missed the first LA Conference held at Oxford in September 1878. The Secretary, Henry R. Tedder, Librarian of The Athenaeum Club in London, invited him on 27 June 1878 to give a paper: 'The great position you fill in the library-interest of this country would make a paper by you a feature of much significance in our Oxford meeting, which I hope it is your intention to attend.'

Crestadoro chose instead to attend the Congress of the National Association for Social Science held

in Cheltenham in October 1878, where he read his paper on taxation reform.

One of the Free Library Committee members, C. Rowley, was very concerned at this and suggested to Thomas Baker on 24 September 1878 that Sutton should be sent instead. Manchester pride was at stake: 'Wigan is sending five members of the committee & the librarian & that is too many. I believe Manchester will not be represented officially if we don't take some action.'

Crestadoro continued to be a member of the LA with a position on the Council, until his death. He was helping to prepare for the second Annual Conference to be held in Manchester when he died. The local organising committee was of course chaired by Thomas Baker and the Conference was held in on 23, 24 and 25 September 1879. Sutton replaced Crestadoro on the Council. There were two brief mentions of his catalogues: 'These libraries are for the most part supplied with printed catalogues, many of them on the facile system brought into use by the late Dr. Crestadoro, and by him styled index-catalogues. … The Manchester catalogue possesses an elaborate index, which makes it useful for consultation elsewhere.'[503]

The new world was beginning to sweep his memory away. Old friends and colleagues were still there though. Dr. John Watts spoke in favour of Axon's proposed resolution on Sunday opening. John Plant from Salford, who always seems to have been an unhappy man, worried that voting or expressing an opinion at the Conference was a risk for ordinary public librarians: 'sometimes very seriously reprimanded—for having dared to express opinions which happened not to be altogether in accordance with those of their town councils.'[504]

This is a useful reminder of the tyranny of the Committee: the same fears are there today where the wrong word spoken at a conference can lead to disciplinary procedures and even dismissal.

## Mancunian Aftermath

Axon, Baker, Crestadoro and Sutton were prominent in the first period of the LA. Given the status of Manchester Free Libraries, it is not surprising that when the second LA Conference was held there in 1879 the comment was made: 'The gathering was rather over-toweringly Mancunian, but very profitable to the Association in increased membership, as the black-letter school was eclipsed by the modern municipal.'[505]

(Presumably black-letter school refers to antiquarian scholars, focused on manuscripts and early printed books.)

In 1896, Alderman Harry Rawson, the man who had been Edwards' bitter opponent, became Chair of the Library Committee. The LA, partly in respect for Manchester's thwarting of the attempt to make the Free Libraries pay income tax, appointed him President. Harry Rawson, born 1820, had left school at ten years of age, and fought all his life to improve his city, unpopular though his campaigns for Sunday music in the parks made him, in some quarters. He died in 1904, still giving civic service to Manchester.

Throughout the existence of the LA, now the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), Manchester has continued to be a popular venue for the Conference. Manchester was the acceptable face of the north; the prejudices lingered: 'The Conference of 1898 ought really to have been held at Wigan, but fearful lest the undeserved reputation of that much-maligned town should repel, we compromised by including Southport and Preston.'[506]

As the years went by, there was a sense of the new participants being inheritors of the past, and the dominance of Manchester was stressed. Sir John MacAlister would not attend the LA conferences

for ‘he saw too many ghosts’ and another commented on this: ‘As we grow older this becomes the lot of each of us; and I wonder if there is anywhere in the kingdom where so many shades are gathering to greet us, as at Manchester.’[507]

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[489] MA, Out Letter 29 November 1875

[490] MA, In Letter 67/83

[491] R.D. MacLeod, ‘Who was James Yates?’ in *Library Review,* 17 (1959-60) pp. 50-7

[492] R.D. MacLeod, ‘Who was James Yates?’

[493] W.A. Munford, *Who Was Who in British Librarianship 1800-1985 A Dictionary of Dates with Notes* (London: LA, 1987) p.55

[494] MA, In Letter 50/208

[495] Ernest A. Savage, *A Librarian’s memories* (London: Grafton, 1952) p.158

[496] Green, Samuel Swett, *The Public library movement in the United States 1853-1893* (Boston Book Co. 1913) p. 63

[497] Wiegand, Wayne A. *Irrepressible reformer: a biography of Melvil Dewey* (Chicago: ALA, 1996) p. 84

[498] *The Leeds Mercury* (Leeds, England), Saturday, November 3, 1877

[499] W. Boyd Rayward, ‘The Early Diffusion Abroad of the Dewey Decimal Classification’ in *Melvil Dewey: the man and the classification (Forest Press 1983)* p154

[500] UML, W.E.A Axon Papers 1038

[501] *Transactions and Proceedings of the Conference of Librarians held in London October*, 1877, p.176

[502] Paul Sturges, ‘United Kingdom, Modern’, in Wayne A. Wiegand and Donald G. Davis, Jr. (eds) Encyclopedia of Library History (New York: garland, 1994) p.636

[503] *Transactions and proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of the Library Association of the United Kingdom Held in Manchester, September 23, 24 and 25, 1879*, edited by the secretaries, Henry R. Tedder and Ernest C.Thomas (Chiswick Press, 1880) p.52

[504] *Transactions and proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of the Library Association*, p.107

[505] Pacy, ‘The Library Association: early days: a retrospect, p.54

[506] Pacy, ‘The Library Association: early days: a retrospect, p.70

[507] CUSTOS VERITAS ,‘Letters on Our Affairs’

# Chapter Nineteen: Diversion into Taxation

> Though the brochure was published both in English and French, the scheme must have been either too original or too revolutionary, for it did not receive the attention or serious consideration which its cleverness and merits deserved.[508]

## Inspiration

What was so important to Crestadoro that he declined the invitation to the very first LA conference and the prestige of giving a paper there?

In *Du Pouvoir Temporel* Crestadoro cited social economy as well as mathematics, physics and technology as inspiring him with the truth of God. His drive to find a simplifying principle in all subjects related to his reverence for a divine purpose. This was the trait that drove Crestadoro to improve and simplify complex matters, whether they were physical manifestations like the Impulsoria or abstractions like the taxation laws. Axon, in the *Manchester Guardian* obituary, described Crestadoro's need to tidy up the system of the English Constitution. However, Crestadoro's predilection for detailed but sometimes rambling explanations meant he was not always successful in his missions.

As Chief Librarian of Manchester he argued endlessly with the Postmaster General over definitions and therefore charges for printed material; in a similar fashion the taxation system seems to have annoyed him into considering a new and fresh approach. As with his inventions and some of his works, his pamphlets on taxation reform baffled those he sought to persuade.

## E.C. Jones

There is a letter from Crestadoro in the BL Department of Manuscripts, Add.52484.f.37b, dated 1 May 1867, written to Ernest Charles Jones on the subject of franchise. Crestadoro's admiration is manifest in his letter, a startling expression of how radical his sympathies really were. Ernest Charles Jones, an extreme Chartist, revolutionary, reformer, poet and novelist, had suffered two years of imprisonment in 1848, which badly undermined his health, and died in Manchester in 1869, just as he was likely to be made MP there. His funeral procession on 6 February was packed with deputations from the Reform League, old chartists, distinguished mourners and working-class crowds to whom he was a martyr: over 2000 people attended. The *Manchester Courier and Lancashire Advertiser* reported in full, adding with pious humbug a comment that his: 'misdirected zeal may well be forgiven when accompanied by such rare abnegation of self.

Although not involved in local politics in Manchester, Crestadoro clearly had strong interests in the fundamental structures that would ensure a fair and equal society, as manifested in *Du Pouvoir Temporel*, and in his ideas for franchise and taxation, both of which were linked in the minds of reformers.

When Crestadoro wrote his letter on 1 May 1867 it was at a time when franchise was a topical concern. John Bright was campaigning for the extension of franchise and, in 1866 to1867, this led to 'a measure of household franchise in the towns to give votes to the great body of the working men.'[509]

Crestadoro's letter indicates characteristic simplification, with the usual pinch of lateral thinking:

> Sir
>
> As I am a British naturalized subject and an old admirer of your noble aspirations, I make no apology for submitting to you a suggestion on the question of Reform. Since all parties agree that the Franchise must be largely extended and equally admit that a line of terminus is necessary, it seems to me that all practical difficulties in the way of arriving at a common understanding might be removed by framing a Bill on the exclusion instead of the inclusion principle, which should assume a universal franchise and only deal with reciting what persons should be excluded: for instance thus:
>
> 'All persons who are not born or naturalized British subjects
>
> 'All persons who are under age
>
> 'All persons whose subsistence and that of their children and other individuals, if any, who maybe chargeable on the same, is not defrayed out of the proceeds of their own income or industry'. And so on enumerating such other excluding qualifications as may be agreed upon by general assent
>
> Yours respectfully
>
> A. Crestadoro[510]

Nothing else has survived to indicate that Crestadoro pursued franchise any further, but the logical connection of the injustice of those without voting rights paying taxation, might have promoted his next investigations.

## Social Economy – Réforme de l'Impôt

Crestadoro produced two pamphlets on taxation, largely similar in content. The first was published

in 1876[511] and led to Crestadoro giving an address to the Social Science Congress in 1878. This address (much more direct in style than the 1876 pamphlet) was published in the same year[512] with a French edition published in Paris.[513] Crestadoro added in his new honorific of Knight of the Crown of Italy to those of Professor and Chief Librarian on the title page.

## Letter

The taxation reform thread starts with his letter 'The Financial System of the United Kingdom', published in the *Manchester Guardian* on 12 February 1874. Crestadoro explains the basic ideas he later embellished:

> This is simply to substitute, instead of rates and taxes, one general annual licence duty, based upon the following broad principle: —That the object of the public charges being the protection of persons and their property, the obligation thereby undoubtedly incumbent upon all persons to bear a fair share of those charges ought to render it unlawful for any person to receive or become possessed of any value, whether in money, goods, land, or other property, without a licence, to be taken with the view of a percentage duty being contributed towards meeting the public burden.

## 1876 Pamphlet

Crestadoro expanded his taxation scheme in a pamphlet, published in 1876 by Longmans, Green, and Co, London. It was priced at One Shilling and has the note 'The Right of Translation Reserved' on the title page so presumably he was already considering the French version. The full title is *On the Best and Fairest Mode of Raising the Public Revenue* and Crestadoro announces himself as a Professor of the University of Turin and Chief Librarian of the Manchester Public Free Libraries. It runs to twenty pages and like *The Art of Making Catalogues* finishes with an exhortation to England: 'It behoves England, the classical land of liberty, to set all nations of the earth an example, than which, in comparison, all her proudest glories must sink into insignificance.'

Crestadoro's scheme is rather hard to follow but it is basically one that taxes by use of property. He pulls in divine authority for the principle of not hoarding wealth but using it for the good of all:

> God speaking to his prophet of a commercial city trading with all the nations of the earth says, 'Her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness unto the Lord; it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for it shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently and for durable clothing.'

Crestadoro's sympathies lie strongly with those who actively labour to create wealth rather than just hold property:

> A bale of imported cotton may remain in the hands of the importer a whole year unexchanged, which means useless, or it may change hands a hundred times during the same period, doing service as value received in exchange for as many cheques or bills, each more or less varying in amount.

He writes in passionate defence of:

> laborious workmen, hard-tasked clerks, honest tradesmen, whose scanty earnings provide with difficulty for the maintenance and education of their families. There are governesses, teachers, clergymen, and various persons ministering to the intellectual and moral wants of the community in the public press, in charitable institutions, and other fields, who devote an unpretending life of self-sacrifice to the good of their fellow-creatures.

For these ‘creditors, not debtors of society’ Crestadoro believes a ‘gentler code of unwritten laws more in accordance with the Christianity we profess’ should operate.

Another typical line of idealistic kindness is displayed when Crestadoro argues that the civil servants who would be made redundant by the new system should be retired on full pay for life.

## John Bright

The radical MP John Bright had fought ferociously for the ending of the Corn Laws, and then campaigned for reform, franchise, and peace. He was a man of immense principle; like Cavour he was not afraid of being unpopular. He became MP for Manchester in 1847 and was thrown out by Manchester voters in 1857, as well as being burnt in effigy, as he was one of the few who denounced the Crimean War. In the following decade, his support for the North and anti-slavery stance in the American Civil War critically influenced both Lincoln and British opinon.

Crestadoro obviously admired him for he sent him a copy of the Taxation Reform pamphlet and received a somewhat brusque but honest reply:

> Rochdale
>
> December 27 78
>
> Dear Sir
>
> I thank you for sending me your pamphlet on Taxation Reform. I have read it with interest but do not venture to give an opinion upon your scheme. It requires to be carefully examined for the change recommended is enormous & the plan does not seem to me as simple as you appear to consider it to be,
>
> I am…
>
> John Bright[514]

John Bright was keenly aware of the relationship of taxation and the franchise. The middle and lower classes paid taxes but through narrowly restricted franchise could not influence the political decisions on how the taxation was spent. It is not surprising that Crestadoro’s focus on the mechanical improvement of an unjust system was of little interest to Bright, radical as his idea might be. He picked up immediately on Crestadoro’s weakness, the contention that the solution is simple. Given the date of the letter, it is likely that Crestadoro sent him the second version of the pamphlet, the one that also appeared in French.

## Speech

In October 1878, Crestadoro read an expanded version of his pamphlet at the Congress of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Sciences, the Economy and Trade, held in Cheltenham.

The Congress itself had to contend with wet and chilly weather, the nuisance of moving between three buildings and, as the *Manchester Guardian* special correspondent noted, the ‘powerful counter attraction’ of the Cheltenham races. However, 600 tickets were sold and the considerable audience, most of which were ladies, gathered in the Montpellier Rotunda ‘made a praiseworthy effort to enjoy a discourse on “the dismal science” by Mr. Bonamy Price, professor of political economy at Oxford and president of the Economy and Trade Department of the Congress.’

The audience was probably thinner for Crestadoro’s talk, and he received a mixed reception. The

*Manchester Guardian* correspondent, as might be expected, gave his city's Chief Librarian generous coverage:

> After the adjournment, Professor Crestadoro, chief librarian of the Manchester Public Free Libraries, read a paper on 'The Best and Fairest Means of Raising the Public Revenue.' The object, he explained, was to do away with all indirect taxes, and to raise all supplies by one single direct contribution, which, however, would be no tax upon land, nor upon capital, but upon income. …. Mr. Watherston, Mr. Chadwick, and other gentlemen took part in the discussion. The former suggested that the paper was not fitted for discussion at the Congress, but that it should be transmitted to the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade and to the editors of papers throughout the country. Mr.Chadwick objected in toto to the principle involved. At night the Mayor gave a conversazione in the Rotunda.[515]

Hopefully the Mayor's conversazione included lavish refreshments for the exhausted speakers and members.

The only other comment on Crestadoro's talk that I can trace is in Volume 5 of *Capital and Labour*, published on 30 October 1878. This refers merely to Crestadoro's reading 'a lengthy paper'.

## Expanded version – English and French

The published paper can be counted as a continental work for it appeared both in English and French in 1878. The English title, again published by Longmans, Green, and Co., is *Taxation Reform or The Best and Fairest Means of Raising the Public Revenue*. The French version was published in Paris by E. Dentu under the title *Réforme de L'Impôt ou Du Seul Principe de L'Impôt qui soit équitable et d'application la plus facile sans gener ni l'agriculture, ni les industries ni le commerce.*

The French version more or less follows the English text. Specific references to the United Kingdom context are dropped, as is the final exhortation to England. Interestingly, Crestadoro omits any mention of being a professor of Turin from his self description on the title page; maybe Paris was just too close to home: 'Par A. Crestadoro Professor de Philosophie, Chevalier de la Couronne d'Italie, Bibliothecaire de la Ville de Manchester.'

The main difference between the 1876 pamphlet and the 1878 paper is that the latter is understandably more direct in style, reflecting the text of the talk. The discursive ponderings on the method of gathering ideas and information together have been dropped, and Crestadoro concentrates on the detail of administering the scheme. The 1878 paper is divided into sections; the structure helps to keep the original listener on track. The final section 'Whether the Proposed Plan is Likely to be Attended with any Difficulties in the Execution' is only touched on in the 1876 pamphlet and presumably has developed through objections people may have raised to the original plan. As far as I can see, Crestadoro has hit upon a form of value-added taxation but it seems to rely heavily on the willingness of people to recognise its value and not cheat. As ever Crestadoro's belief in the goodness of humanity, particularly of the English, leads him to be idealistic in his schemes.

The pamphlet was listed in various bibliographies on taxation at the end of the century. Examples are *Bibliography of Works on Taxation* by E. M. Sawyer, published 1898 and the *Public Documents of Massachusetts,* Volume 8, 1899. Otherwise the pamphlet, whether in English or French, sank without trace. Credland, quoted at the start of this chapter, admired its cleverness and was kind in attributing its failure to its originality.

Undeterred, Crestadoro at the end of his life, as at the start of his writing career with *Della organizzazione delle Casse di Risparmio dei Monti di Pietà e delle Banche Generali,* was wrestling with economic and social reform issues with a study of joint stock companies. His Genoan background still influenced him.

[508] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.151

[509] George Macaulay Trevelyan, *Life of John Bright* (London: Constable, 1913) p.351

[510] BL, Add.MS 52484, Andrea Crestadoro to E.C. Jones, May 1867

[511] Crestadoro, *On the Best and Fairest Mode of Raising the Public Revenue*

[512] Andrea Crestadoro, *Taxation Reform or the best and fairest means of raising the public revenue being a paper read at the Congress of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, Section Economy and Trade, held at Cheltenham Oct. 1878* (London: Longmans, 1878)

[513] Andrea Crestadoro, *Reforme de l'Impote au du seul principe de l'impot qui soit equitable, et d'application la plus facile* (Paris Dentue, 1878)

[514] MA, *Odds and Ends (unpublished journal),* 15 (Easter 1879) , John Bright, Letter to Professor A Crestadoro

[515] 'The Social Science Congress', *Manchester Guardian* (25 October 1996)

# Chapter Twenty: A Staff of Experienced and Able Gentlemen

> It is excellently lighted, the books are in an excellent state of arrangement, and we have a chief librarian who has not his superior in the country —(hear, hear)—with a staff of experienced and able gentlemen, who I wish could just be transferred to the British Museum to show them how to work there as they know how to work here. But in addition to these advantages we have that which no library can be considered complete without, we have an admirable catalogue which is a monument to the Librarian's credit and honour, which can never be too highly praised. (Hear, hear.)[516]

## Not his Superior in the Country

Mr. James Crossley singled out Crestadoro with the above speech at the celebration on 11 February 1878 to mark the removal of the Reference Library from Campfield to the Old Town Hall. Crossley conferred a public honour upon Crestadoro perhaps as precious to him as the Corona d'Italia he would receive a month later.

Amongst those assembled no one had a higher reputation in Manchester than the charismatic and legendary Crossley. Corpulent, sharp witted and immensely knowledgeable, Crossley joked upon this momentous occasion that he had represented a risk to the shaky Campfield building: 'A gentleman rather heavy in his proportions might have felt it possible that his precise weight was just the momentum required to bring down that ill-fated building. (Laughter.).'

Although Crossley had initially supported the return of Edward Edwards for the Reference Library catalogue contract, Crestadoro had soon won his esteem. In return Crestadoro devoted a whole

paragraph of his introduction to the 1864 catalogue to express his gratitude to Crossley. The respect Crossley afforded Crestadoro must have been a factor in his subsequent appointment as Chief Librarian. The formidable Crossley and the gentle Crestadoro were scholars, bibliophiles and men of experience, and were drawn together in friendship. A mark of Crestadoro's importance to Crossley is the discovery after his death in 1883 of fragments in his pocket-book relating to Crestadoro and Axon.[517]

In his speech not only does Crossley deem Crestadoro the best chief librarian in the country but he also emphasises how the BM could learn from his staff. It must have been deeply satisfying for Crestadoro that his achievements had raised him to such a level of comparison.

The Letter Books, the early histories and memoirs of the Free Libraries, the printed catalogues in so many towns and cities, from Dundee down to Plymouth, all bear witness that Crestadoro was indeed in many ways the best Chief Librarian in the country. He was not a prime mover in the politics of the Free Libraries or in the LA, but he was the wise man others consulted and followed. No one gave more advice or help to those who asked than Crestadoro, and although inevitably the pupils overtook the master, his influence had formed them.

## The Crestadoro Team

It is significant that Crossley praised Crestadoro's staff: the team Crestadoro built was key to the future of Manchester Libraries and the wider library movement. They were a credit to him. (Crossley omits any mention of a whole section of staff, the female assistants. To be fair, he was probably only thinking of the sub and branch librarians as at this stage, Crestadoro's senior staff were exclusively male.)

It takes a good manager to motivate staff and mould them into an effective team. Having the right staff in the first place helps, and the Free Libraries were plagued initially by unsuitable boy assistants and by librarians who had no idea of what libraries were about.

Crestadoro proved his worth: how did others fare?

In London, Panizzi's formidable character, as well as jealousy of his achievements, brought him bitter enemies but his own staff was generally loyal. Panizzi was ruthless to anyone he disliked: his harassment of Edwards would have ended up today at a tribunal. However, the Panizzi who had fought hard for his country's freedom was fervent in support of better salaries, holidays and conditions for his staff. He managed to shake off the dross amongst his staff, developed the elite assistants to take the BM forward and waited to resign until he was sure of John Winter Jones being appointed as his successor. Assistants wrote petitions to defend him against scurrilous attacks and expressed their sorrow on his retirement. But it would not have been comfortable to be one of the staff he disapproved of.

In Manchester, some of 'Edwards' library boys' as Thomas Greenwood describes them, remembered their Chief with respect: 'Mr. John Chadfield was under Edwards for three years as a boy in the library, and "always found him a courteous gentleman"'[518]. J. Taylor Kay who became a branch librarian wrote: 'I loved the man. I was a youthful assistant of his, when the Manchester Free Library Committee did not properly appreciate him, in 1858'.[519]

Others remembered Edwards' violence: 'One of these gentlemen tells a story of how a boy assistant was carrying an armful of books in the Manchester Library with his cap on. The librarian threatened to box the lad's ears if he did not take off his cap. A boy with his cap on in a library could not, evidently, in Edwards' estimation, be respectful to the books.'[520]

Smiles seems to have been fond of his staff, good friends with the branch librarians whom he already knew, and generally sympathetic. But he was not decisive in assessing his staff, judging by his dithering when asked for recommendations.

## Dynasty

In a way, the childless Crestadoro founded a dynasty: his deputy Sutton succeeded him as Chief Librarian, Sutton's deputy L. Stanley Jast succeeded him in 1920 and then the chain was broken in 1932 with the appointment of Charles Nowell, City Librarian at Coventry. Two of Sutton's five sons, Oliver and George, had posts at the Reference Library. Oliver who moved to the John Rylands Library was lost in WW1 and George seriously wounded. Axon's son Ernest and grandson Geoffrey continued the tradition with their posts with Manchester Public Libraries. W.G. Fry, himself the Deputy in the 1930s, felt he had to explain the break in the succession:

> It may be worth while to add a note respecting the Deputy Chief Librarians who did not become Chief Librarians. Mr. Sutton's deputies were, perhaps, more inclined to literature and antiquities than administration. Dr.W.E. Axon is well known, not only locally, as an author and journalist, and Mr. W.R. Credland was for a number of years the Hon. Secretary of the Manchester Literary Club. He also wrote the history of the Manchester Public Libraries. Mr. Ernest Axon who happily is still living was successively deputy to two Chief Librarians (Mr. Jast and the present Chief Librarian). He retired in 1932 after more than fifty years' service. A Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, he is a local historian (specializing in Nonconformity in Lancashire) and a genealogist of repute.[521]

The Letter Books suggest that Crestadoro was one of those rare managers who both like their staff to do well and to be happy. He was not a powerful driving figure but a kind one whose skills and scholarship won general respect. The Letters and references in various memoirs suggest his trademark was courtesy and gentleness towards both staff and readers. He could certainly reprimand on occasion but there is evidence he tried to protect staff from the Committee.

On policy issues Crestadoro gave priority to the readers, but also considered the impact on staff and how adjustments might be made. This is shown repeatedly in his response to proposed changes to hours or service. The fullest example is in his answers to the Librarian of Guildhall Library on 29 November 1875. Crestadoro believes the libraries should be open until 10 pm and that this would be a great benefit to the public:

> But on the principle of 'unum facere aliud non omittere' means ought to be provided to increase and arrange the staff as to meet all the requirements by such an all-important institution as a Public Library, without inflicting any individual hardships upon the employees who cannot, and ought not to be expected to work with efficiency longer than 8 or 9 hours per day.

It was Crestadoro who proposed to the Committee that the issuing of books in the Lending Library should cease at 5pm on Saturdays. This was a vexed question but there was evidence of little demand after this time on a Saturday, and it was a boon to the assistants to be able to clear everything up. This went to the Council, who approved his suggestion on 26 June 1872.

## Deputies and Branch librarians

Individuals and the relationships between them gradually emerge from the pages of the Minutes and the Letters Books. Changes were fairly rare amongst the branch librarians though sometimes

the ending of their employment was traumatic. The Minutes give a flavour of how ruthless the Committee could be for those who did not meet their exacting standards.

As the branch libraries increased in number so did Crestadoro's team grow, and his responsibility with it. The Minutes of the Free Library Committee and the various Sub Committees, the mundane facts and figures serve to map exactly who was who at the Free Libraries throughout Crestadoro's career, and occasionally the fates that befell them.

Certain names occur regularly and some of these also appear in other contexts – as members of the LA, as authors and in different careers. The branch librarians varied enormously in their backgrounds and abilities and as with the assistants there were the few who become enthralled by their new profession and developed a closer relationship with Crestadoro.

A distinction can be made between those staff engaged with the LA and those who may have worked well, but to whom being a librarian was only a job like any other. Crestadoro, as the third Chief Librarian, both witnessed and aided the shift towards professionalism. In all his years he dealt with a motley range of staff and developed his own trusted team.

The early branch librarians were often appointed through occupations such as bookselling or printing which would have brought them into contact with the Committee. Other routes were through posts with the Council or bodies such as the Gas Board (Council owned in Manchester) or through promotion from library assistant.

These are sketches of some of the main individuals in Crestadoro's working life, the deputies and branch librarians who formed his immediate staff and in some cases became his friends.

## The lively Charles Dyall

Strictly speaking Charles Dyall was never a member of Crestadoro's staff for he left just before Crestadoro became Chief Librarian. But they became well acquainted and remained in touch.

Dyall had been librarian at the Manchester Mechanics Institution before he was appointed on 11 August 1857 to the new Hulme Branch, along with John Mitchell who was appointed to the new Ancoats Branch. They both started training at Campfield under Edwards on 14 September. Charles Dyall had an eventful time at Hulme with three moves of the library.

By 9 May 1860, Dyall was looking for a change and he asked for permission to apply for a post as a Gas Rental Collector. Dyall's brother was at Campfield as an assistant and brought his brother grief by serious misconduct, which involved a sum of money and an attempt to blame Joseph Radford for the loss. Dyall wrote to Smiles in January 1861 apologising for his brother, for the trouble he brought Smiles and hoped he would be given a chance to stay and redeem himself.

In 1863, Dyall brought glory to Manchester by inventing the Library Indicator. He presented the model designed: 'to enable Borrowers to ascertain at a glance the number of the volumes available for circulation in contradistinction to those already in the hands of readers.'

In the years to come, Crestadoro always gave Dyall credit for this groundbreaking invention. It is remarkable how proud Crestadoro was of Dyall's invention, and how generous in his championship. It is thanks to Crestadoro that Dyall is generally credited with the invention of the indicator. It was another librarian, Alfred Cotgreave, who developed and popularized the system in 1877 at Wednesbury. (Cotgreave's first post was with the Manchester Royal Exchange Library, and he may have heard there of Dyall's invention.) Crestadoro wrote about the indicator to James Yates on 2 September 1878 but interestingly at this stage indicators had not really taken off: these were

the early years of Cotgreave's improvements:

> Our Indicator was the invention of Mr. Charles Dyall, formerly of our staff, but now Curator of the Walker Art Gallery of Liverpool, to whom, I would suggest you should communicate. It has now been in use at the Hulme Branch since about 1860 for the class Fiction. We have a similar indicator at the Chorlton Branch but our Committee have not thought it worthwhile to place them in the other Branches.
>
> About ten years ago the Boston Library Trustees, without knowing of our Indicator, introduced a somewhat similar contrivance into their Library, when I drew their attention to Mr Dyall's invention. I believe they have long since discarded the Indicator altogether, and I have not heard that the instrument is anywhere in use?

Cotgreave developed a lucrative business manufacturing the indicators and their cabinets as well as other library gadgets. Despite their proliferation, very few indicators have survived. I visited the only complete one (a magnificent Cotgreave cabinet) at the Inglis Memorial Library at Edzell, a preserved Victorian library. Each tiny ledger holds book and borrower details and the coloured ends indicate whether the book is in or out.

Fig.35 Cotgreave Indicators

In 1863, Charles Dyall moved to Liverpool as Secretary to the Lyceum Club, and then in 1877 became the first Curator of the new Walker Art Gallery. Dyall went on to have an illustrious career there. He also was a poet, a librettist, a man of liberal sympathies, good humour and very popular in Liverpool. It appears there was a family connection with Samuel Smiles, so he would have been related to his Chief at Manchester, Robert Smiles.

On the 22 May 1879, Dyall gave an account to Axon of the invention of the indicator, describing his annoyance that the Committee never rewarded with 'a penny or even a vote of thanks'. He added that one of his assistants emigrated and introduced it to America. He also refers to: 'our late lamented friend Dr Crestadoro' sending him a photograph of one in the Boston Free Library.[522] On 30 April 1869 a boy assistant had informed Crestadoro that his parents were emigrating to America and would take him with them. The signature is difficult to read, August William Brausch or Branch, but perhaps this was the boy who took the indicator to the States.

## The Anxious John Mitchell

The Ancoats Branch opened on 7 December 1857 at 190 Great Ancoats Street, in a revamped shop. The branch moved to Every Street in September 1867. The new building was in Gothic style, designed by Alfred Waterhouse, who later was the architect of the New Town Hall. Credland described it as 'the prettiest of the smaller branch libraries'.[523] This pretty building was in the heart of Ancoats, a notorious district, dense with factories, mills and insanitary housing, and rife with poverty, disease and crime.

Mitchell was very prone to contact the Committee or Crestadoro with complaints of assistants and readers, as well as with his personal grievances. He seems to have been an anxious person, nervous of change and authority. He took time to accept Crestadoro, contacting the Committee with his complaints in the early days, rather than dealing with his Chief.

Mitchell was prone to feeling hard done by. For example, on 25 April 1866 he wrote to Thomas Baker that he was very upset about shelving being sent from Hulme to his Branch. In the same letter he referred to something he had proposed to Crestadoro and which was not followed up; he complained about the Rusholme Branch taking his customers and the problems at Ancoats because the building could not be enlarged. He sounds self-pitying and that was not likely to impress. He must have exasperated with his frequent requests for advice: on the price of a book for the blind as a dog has ripped it; on how to deal with guarantors; on how to deal with the 'unruly behaviour' of readers; the 'irregular attendance' of an assistant.

Although he became punctilious in consulting with Crestadoro, his letters suggest that he found the transition from Smiles difficult. Everything went wrong for Mitchell, from problems with his tax returns to complaints from readers. Robert Fairbrother (probably the cotton trader) was annoyed by him and wrote on 22 November 1866):

> I do not know if there has been any complaint made to you before of the management of the Ancoats & Ardwick Branch of the Free Library – if not, I think it is high time something was done to supply the public with the books they require, in a different manner than I have seen them served (myself included) for a length of time now. Mr Mitchell (I believe) is the party in management but I have only seen him once in the Library for some months. I generally call between 5 & 6 o'clock, on my way home from business, and it may be on this account I never see him in the Library.

Mr. Fairbrother's specific criticism was the time taken to enter a book: '3 minutes should be sufficient not 5-15, the two youths are always talking and the "one that enters is the one that serves"'. He ends the letter to Crestadoro with: 'P.S For your attention to this, you would greatly oblige by keeping the names private.'

(It is notable in the Minutes and Letter Books how often readers will only deal with Crestadoro or entrust him with keeping confidences.)

Mitchell responded defensively on 24 November 1866. The anonymity was obviously a sore point to Mitchell but it is understandable why a reader would not want to upset local staff: 'In reference to the complaint of the gentleman who wishes to remain incog., permit me to remark…'

In September 1869, Mitchell foolishly took a fortnight's holiday without obtaining Crestadoro's permission. Crestadoro was responsible for arranging leave to ensure adequate cover, and it is incomprehensible that Mitchell flouted this. It earned him a severe rebuke from the Committee and a memorandum to all the branches: 'with an ultimatum that no similar offence will hereafter be excused.'

Despite his long service the Committee treated him harshly in the end. The Minutes for 11 October 1871 record Mitchell's resignation. He wrote to suggest he might retire because of: 'Oft recurring bronchial attacks and some of the infirmities incident to advanced years' but as he has nothing to fall back on he asked if he might be employed for some hours per week on the catalogue. He requested that when a successor has been appointed, he (Mitchell) could spend six to seven hours a day on completing the Ancoats catalogue, eliminating errors and making improvements.

Mitchell has made an error of judgment here, by criticising the catalogue and by making a bid for a post for himself. The Committee took the opportunity to get rid of him for they take the letter to mean an absolute resignation, ignoring his second request for cataloguing work. There is an ensuing jumble of correspondence that does support the idea that Mr. Mitchell had tried to manipulate behind Crestadoro's back and undermine him.

Mitchell wrote to Baker on 16 October 1871, asking him to note his request to Mr Crestadoro to complete the Ancoats Catalogue:

> not hiding from him all the anomalies in its compilation and the many inaccuracies, clerical, technical which disfigure the Campfield Catalogue (the last I have not seen) Should Mr C be hostile to my proposed new engagement I fancy there is an end to the matter).

Mitchell sent a very distressed letter on 27 November 1871 to Sutton as Clerk of Manchester Free Libraries Committee, a bitter and long tirade about this injustice: 'to send me adrift on the world, after upwards of 14 year's devoted service without even – literally – a moment's warning. Against the ungracious act and (in my judgement) indefensible wrong.'

The Minutes for 29 November 1871 record how poor Mitchell appealed in vain. The Committee decided there was no cataloguing work at present but would consider the appeal if occasion arises. The last we hear of the unhappy Mitchell's appeal is a note of the Committee's refusal to allow his claim for twenty pounds. It obviously did not pay to play an unskilful game of divide and rule; criticising the Campfield catalogue to Baker was not a good ploy. Crestadoro, however kind he may have been, must have been relieved to be rid of Mitchell.

The only follow up to Mitchell after he has left Ancoats is in the 'holiday' letter Crestadoro sent to Axon from Harrogate on 2 September 1872:

> I received your LETTER and also the two Saturday's Guardians you kindly addressed me here. The former I had no longer use for but I was glad to find in it enclosed a cutting containing Mr Mitchell's LETTER. It is very ingenious and scientific and it gave me a few minutes amusing diversion from the rural idleness I was just indulging in.

The Newspaper Archive and the *Manchester Guardian* online do not reveal any letter by a Mr. Mitchell around this time so what amused Axon and Crestadoro remains a mystery.

## The Practical Librarians of Rochdale Road - Mr. Bellhouse and Mr. Houghton Mills

The third branch library was opened at Livesey Street, Rochdale Road on 4 June 1860, the first purpose built branch library in the country. Mr. James Bellhouse was appointed on 21 February 1860. His resignation letter in June 1869 shows he returned to his former employment at the Gas Board.

What did Bellhouse offer and what was the Committee looking for in this new role of branch librarian? Bellhouse had been a clerk at the Gas Board and he would be used to sorting out problems for customers and dealing with staff. He had experience, presumably a good service record, and practical managers were needed at the Free Libraries. Given all the building problems, any knowledge of the gas industry, would have been an added attraction to the Committee.

Bellhouse also appears to have been a respected member of the Unitarian church, as his letter to Crestadoro on Mrs. Gaskell's death illustrates. Being a Unitarian would have helped his application: Thomas Baker was a powerful figure at the same Cross Street Chapel.

Once in post, Bellhouse was on relaxed terms with Crestadoro's predecessor, Smiles, judging by the light hearted and confiding manner in which he wrote to him. He was soon on equally friendly terms with Crestadoro.

Generally, he was a firm and calm manager, working well with both the Committee and Crestadoro. The Rochdale Road Library Sub Committee trusted him and praised his actions rather than criticising him for taking the initiative without consultation. For example, the Minutes for 28 February 1868 record that: 'The Librarian reported that the books had been damaged by small and dirty children who had been sent for them and that he had refused to deliver books to said children. The Sub Committee approved of the course he had taken.'

On 28 July 1868, the Committee supported Bellhouse in taking absence for family bereavement; they are more generous than usual which again suggests he was held in regard: 'The Librarian reported that on account of a death in his family he had been absent from the Library a few days in the preceding week, and asked permission for a few added days absence which was granted.'

On 29 March 1869, Bellhouse wrote to the Committee for permission to apply for a Collectorship post at the Gas Board: 'I have been employed as Librarian at this Branch a little over nine years and for two years previous, namely 1858-59 I was engaged in the Gas Office (under the immediate superintendence of the late W Booth) as Clerk assistant, Cash receiver, and Collector: thus constituting Eleven years service with the Corporation.'

It would be interesting to know why Bellhouse decided to move back to the Gas Boar, perhaps for a less stressful life or a higher salary.

Bellhouse resigned in June 1869 and A. Houghton Mills was appointed in his place, at 28/- a week plus residence 'adjoining the Library and Coal Gas & Water' as is noted in the Minutes. Mr. Bellhouse was paid £1-10 for the Gas Bracket and Cupboard he had fitted into the residence.

Houghton Mills had been a boy assistant, probably the Alexander Mills appointed on 17 May 1861 at Campfield Reference. He seems to have coped well with the role though he put a foot wrong in November 1869 when he exceeded his authority by changing a rule. The Ancoats and Rochdale Road Sub Committee rebuked him sternly:

> The Committee having seen a notice in the Newsroom signed 'by order of H Mills' to the effect that no books would be delivered for reading in the room after 8 o'clock pm. Mr Mills was called in and informed that the Committee regarded the notice as most improper

> and that he must distinctly understand that he must communicate with the Committee or the Chief Librarian before altering any of the rules of the Libraries.

In fact Houghton Mills was always ready to consult or confide difficulties to Crestadoro but not with the anxiety that Mitchell showed, and he wrote to Sutton, his ex colleague at Campfield, as a friend. Mills seems to have been happy to liaise with Sutton. On 6 May 1870, he sent Sutton orders for soap and soda and then asked him to approach Crestadoro with some suggestions to tone down the overdue notice:

> I shall be glad if you will ask the Dr about leaving out the words through which I have drawn the pencil. When the book has simply been overlooked (as is often the case) some of the borrowers grumble sadly at the … say we 'need not have been so sharp about book'…The overdue notice is attached to this letter and the words taken out are marked in pencil: 'I have to request the immediate return of the Book~~, in order that further steps for its recovery may be rendered unnecessary.'~~

It is interesting to see Crestadoro's subordinates followed his lead in making the Free Libraries as pleasant as possible for readers whilst still safeguarding the collections.

Mills, like most of the branch librarians, did occasionally commit the cardinal sin of not having the library open on time or properly covered. On 13 November 1871, Crestadoro wrote sternly to Mills:

> I have received another LETTER complaining that the Livesey Street Library is not opened at the appropriate time, and I have myself been this morning in the Library and find it was not opened till fully ten minutes after the proper time. At a quarter to nine there were only two assistants on duty and the tablets were not prepared for the public. I should be glad if you would attend to this matter and relieve me from the necessity of reporting it to the Committee. Please to arrange that the library door be in future opened, not by the charwoman, but by each of the staff in turns who is to sign his name in the time-book as opener, and to make a memorandum of each time by the library clock, so that I may ascertain if their time denoted by it agrees with the correct time of the day.

Behind this warning, Crestadoro was clearly trying to avoid seeing Mills get into worse trouble with the Committee. He ended on a warm note, asking Mills to come along to Campfield to select books: 'Will you please step down as soon as is convenient.'

Mills, like Mitchell before him, had to confront many unpleasant situations over the years and in 1877 he has had enough, resigning on 15 March 1877: 'After sixteen years service I beg to lay before your committee my resignation as Librarian of the Rochdale Road Branch library.'

Whilst serving his notice he had to contend with yet another violent row as he reported rather incoherently, showing his upset, on 20 March:

> I said he had better be quiet or I should get a policeman and turn him out this made him worse. He said I dare not come out from behind the counter and dared me fetch a policeman. I had just got to the folding doors when he rushed at me like a mad bull, shaking his fist in my face he called me 'damned Scamp and dared me to go out. I had stood this very quietly but as I got into the vestibule so far forgot his cunning as to repeat I was a 'damned scamp' and again flourished his fist in my face the next minute he was on his back he got up and made an attempt to strike me when he went down again.

## The Frail J. Taylor Kay

J. Taylor Kay, by his own account, was encouraged by Edwards to become an assistant in 1858: '"He was very kind to me he wos," to quote poor Joe in Bleak House. I was a short, thin, pale, delicate office lad, and had been a persistent user of the library when he suggested my being an assistant, an offer which I enthusiastically accepted.'[524]

Taylor Kay did well, and left in 1860 for the prestigious post of librarian at the Manchester Athenaeum, returning to Manchester Free Libraries on 11 August 1863 to replace Charles Dyall as the Hulme Branch Librarian and to act as secretary to the Committee.

When Smiles resigned, J. Taylor Kay was brought in from Hulme to stand in for him, remaining there until he was appointed to the new branch at Chorlton and Ardwick, Rusholme Road. This prestigious Chorlton and Ardwick Branch opened on 6 October 1866 (the architect again was Alfred Waterhouse) so Taylor Kay would have had some time with Crestadoro at Campfield before he moved to the branch. The building was the first to have alcoves in the reading room; this proved a nightmare for supervision.

Sadly the Minutes record that Taylor Kay was forced to resign from the Chorlton Branch for incompetence, and his senior assistant, Geoffrey Boughey was appointed instead. Boughey was often driven to contact the Committee directly for advice: this would have reflected poorly on Taylor Kay. Boughey also contacted Crestadoro on 4 December 1866 when Taylor Kay failed to deal with the horrible behaviour of the two juniors towards him.

Shortly after, presumably on Crestadoro's reporting this, Taylor Kay was issued with a warning: 'The Chairman was requested to tell Mr Kay that the Committee is not satisfied with his management of the Library.' (18 December 1866). Then, in February 1867, they delivered an ultimatum in the shape of this resolution: 'Mr Kay, the Branch Librarian, is inadequate to the duties of the office and that he be requested to send in his resignation.'

There was little choice, for if Kay did not resign, he was informed that Crestadoro would formally dismiss him. Crestadoro was spared this unpleasant task for Kay resigned on February 26 with dignity and control, thanking the Committee for their kindness: 'in spite of any imperfections I may have shown, through my extremely delicate state of health.'

J. Taylor Kay's dismissal is puzzling: he was trusted enough to be secretary to the Committee on a temporary basis when Smiles left and he clearly was an intelligent and educated person. Frail health was usually treated sympathetically but apparently not in his case. Taylor Kay struggled to deal with violent incidents at the Chorlton and Ardwick Branch, and Boughey's hints of Taylor Kay's keeping library books for himself, or letting friends have them would not have helped.

The gentlemanly and learned J. Taylor Kay eventually reappears in the Library Letter Books. He became librarian at Owen's College in 1871, a role much more suited to the scholar he was, rather than dealing with the rougher elements of Ardwick. The matter of the missing books related below must have been resolved, for J. Taylor Kay was on good terms with the Manchester Libraries. In particular, J. Taylor Kay must have been assured of Crestadoro's friendship; they certainly shared both learning and liberal principles.

Contact resumed with a query from Crestadoro on 5 June 1871,and Taylor Kay emphasised in his reply that he is: 'Glad to have communication with you.'

Regular exchanges followed over the years, ranging from scholarly debates to requests to borrow the Library handcart or a copy of Ben Johnson's *Conversations* for a Professor Mark.

Taylor Kay appeared on many a platform with the men who dismissed him. He was actively involved in the new LA. He fulminated against fiction provision (this bothered him much more than his more robust ex colleagues), gave a paper on statistics at the second Conference in 1879, and wrote on library matters in the *Library Journal* and *Nineteenth Century*. He was a member of the British Association, presenting a paper on County Councils at the Manchester Conference in 1887.

According to Mumford, Taylor Kay was eventually dismissed by Owen's College in 1894: 'He left when informed that his services were: "no longer required"'.[525]

In 1897 he was elected as an auditor for Manchester but this probably was not a salaried post. He died on 23 February 1903 and the obituary in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* two days later records a distinguished civic and professional life.

## George Boughey

Boughey was appointed to the post of Branch Librarian at Chorlton and Ardwick in March 1867, and in May 1867 he reported that Taylor Kay on his departure had kept two books and a volume of Tracts. This serious breach involved Joseph Heron, the formidable Town Hall Clerk, and Crestadoro as investigators. Boughey seems eager to cause trouble for his former manager: 'I have to say that there is no direct positive proof that he has them but at the same time I feel convinced that he has them or has lent them to some of his friends.'

He is sure that Kay has the *Pickwick Papers*:

> as to my reasons for supposing that he had them I wish to state firstly that he constantly lent books to his friends who were not borrowers without entering them either into the Daily Register or elsewhere thus rendering it impossible to trace them when missing and secondly that in the case of one book viz Pickwick Papers I have not the least doubt but that he has lent it out.

On the second book: 'I am not quite so confident though I am satisfied in my own mind that he lent it to one of the actors from the Theatre Royal.'

Chorlton and Ardwick was a tough branch to run; deep in the heart of slums and heavy industry, it is not surprising that there are continual incidents of violence and abusive behaviour. Even the robust Chairman, Thomas Baker, was on the receiving end. Three readers threatened him in April 1867 and one of them, Moses McCorkhill: 'greeted the Chairman when he left the Library with similar yells besides applying to him vile and opprobrious language.'

Boughey seems to have been a fair minded man and considerate of his staff. He was confident in making arrangements and informing Crestadoro of them rather than asking permission, but with a pleasant tone that can have caused no offence. A sample letter from 4 April 1874 suggests a manager in control of his affairs:

> I find the painter will begin work at 6am and work until 8-9pm. I therefore think that the best arrangement I can make will be for part of the staff to come on duty at 6am, and remain until 1pm – and the other part to come on at 1pm and remain until the men leave at 8-9 pm, giving to each an equal number of mornings and evenings, so that the time may be fairly divided.

Boughey was taken seriously ill shortly after this and the support he received indicates he was a valued member of staff. There seems to have been some friction with Sutton. On 9 October 1878,

Boughey replied resentfully to his questions on the assistants' routines. As a final note to this saga, when Sutton succeeded Crestadoro he tightened up on staff. For example, on 25 August 1880, Mr. Hand had his salary deducted for being absent three weeks beyond his allocated holidays. Boughey committed the cardinal crime of producing incorrect reports by guessing at numbers. Sutton dismissed him. He begged for three months notice as his wife and son were ill and there were heavy doctor's bills. He was given three months salary instead.

## The Rough and Ready Frank Brindley

The fifth branch, the Cheetham Branch, opened at York Street on 29 January 1872 in an inadequate building, formerly a school. The collection surpassed those of the other branches, for Cheetham residents were 'somewhat prosperous and well-to-do' although: 'a large proportion of the poorer classes were found amongst them who could not afford to buy books.'[526] The Cheetham Branch was immensely popular and a splendid new building was constructed further up York Street and opened on 11 February 1878.

Frank Brindley was the Cheetham Branch Librarian. He was another boy assistant, probably at Campfield, who had risen from the ranks. A promotion was recorded in the 28 February 1866 Minutes with an increase from 10/- to 12/-.

As branch librarian he ran a tight ship, but treated staff fairly and supported them when they suffered illness. One assistant in particular, Emily Royds, struggled with her health, as a sequence of letters shows:

> J Royds to Mr Brindley
>
> I beg to inform you that my daughter Emily has gone to her aunt's near Hollingworth Lake and that I have rec'd a LETTER this morning stating she is improving but still very weak. Dr Crestadoro kindly gave her permission to go from home a short time, his kindness shall not be abused. (Letter 49/185)
>
> My daughter Emily Royds was again taken ill yesterday at the Cheetham Library and was brought home insensible in a cab. The surgeon who attended her says she is too weak at present to attend her duties but she was so anxious to return to the Library that she did so before she was fit. I take this opportunity to state that the kindness shown to her by Mr Brindley and his assistants yesterday is worthy of great praise. (Letter 49/202)

There was no timidity about Frank Brindley; he dealt firmly with troublesome readers.

Brindley seems to have survived very well apart from one incident in 1878:

> Cheetham June 26 1878
>
> The Chairman read a letter which the father of one of the assistants Miss Laura Snarr had sent to Mr Crestadoro as to the conduct of Mr Brindley to his daughter. The Chairman also read a letter addressed to him by an anonymous writer complaining that Mr Brindley had sent out the youngest assistant for beer three times on Whit Monday morning. Mr Brindley was called in by the Sub Committee and the Chairman read the anonymous letter to him and Mr Brindley said that on whit Monday several friends from Grimsby called to see him, that he put them into one of the lower rooms and that he sent for beer for them to take with the refreshments they had brought with them but he said on no other occasion had he sent out for beer. Mr Brindley said he could do with one assistant less than the number he had.

> Mr Brindley then withdrew and the Chairman was requested by the Committee to have some conversations with him and to show him the impropriety of introducing intoxicating liquor into the Library and also to speak with him with respect to his temper and his treatment of the assistant.

He must have been highly valued to avoid dismissal.

## Campfield

Crestadoro had responsibility for all the branches and visited them regularly but he was based at Campfield, with his room at the Reference Library. It is here that the brightest of the staff learnt from him, becoming significant later as librarians and active in the LA. These individuals have already appeared in this book but here is the outline that emerges from the Minutes and Letters.

## Henry Allpass – an ally in Cardiff

Cardiff Free Library requested Crestadoro to circulate their advertisement for '*Librarian and Secretary to Cardiff Free Library'* amongst the staff, and Henry Allpass was successful in his application. Allpass who had worked directly for Crestadoro in the Reference Library always remained in contact with him, respectfully seeking his advice and following his models for the catalogue and library administration. Like other colleagues his thanks on giving in his notice on 19 February 1876 sounds both personal and sincere: 'In one sense it is with much regret I tender this resignation, as, during the whole time I have been as Assistant in the Manchester Free Libraries, I have been treated with uniform kindness for which I now beg to offer my sincere thanks.'

## W.E.A. Axon (1846-1913): Crestadoro's chronicler

The first record for Axon is in the Minutes for 1 March 1861 when he was appointed as a boy assistant at Campfield Lending Library, at a salary of five shillings per week. Another boy, T. O'Malley, was appointed at Campfield Reference Library at a salary of 6/- per week. Both were on a month's trial. They replaced two assistants, Albert Dyall (Charles Dyall's wayward brother) and Joseph Dyson, both fired for misconduct.

O'Malley went on to cause trouble but within a few weeks Axon's wage was increased to 6/-, always the token of the Committee's approval. His wages continued to rise. The Minutes of 26 August 1863 noted that both he and Mills have had their wages increased from 8/- to 12/- shillings.

Crestadoro must have been well aware of how exceptional Axon was, for as soon as he became Chief Librarian he moved him to the Campfield Reference Library as second assistant in May 1864, with the Committee's approval. Axon became Senior Assistant in June 1867; his salary increased from 21/- to 25/- per week as noted in the Minutes for 26 June 1867.

Axon justified his request for an increase on the interesting grounds that he has prepared the Hulme catalogue in his own time:

> Being anxious to secure the fulfillment of the wishes of the Committee for a useful and practical Catalogue of the Hulme Branch, I undertook myself in preparation upon an improved and successful plan, devoting to it my whole time and leisure both before and after the office hours for upwards of six months. (Letter to Chairman, 26 June 1867)

Axon, like Sutton, was a high flyer and he became Librarian in the Lending Library and then Sub-Librarian. It was a shock when he unexpectedly resigned in 1874 to move to the Antilles Phosphate and Chemical Company, which a few months later went bankrupt. Axon became librarian at the

*Manchester Guardian*.

The Committee took the unusual step on his resignation of presenting him with a copy of the Reference Catalogue, and he remained close to his former colleagues, including Crestadoro.

## Charles William Sutton (1848-1920): born to be Chief Librarian

Munford wrote of Sutton that: 'he classically unites the librarianship of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries'. As we have seen, Sutton considered that he really acted as Chief Librarian for a couple of years before he became one, and as Crestadoro's successor he raised the Manchester library service to new heights.

Sutton joined Crestadoro as a boy assistant in the Reference Library on 22 September 1864, appointed at 10/-.

Both Baker and Crestadoro marked Sutton for rapid advancement with the unusual note on 25 July 1866 that he should get an increase from 12/- to 14/- shillings: 'immediately on his attaining 12 months service.' He was soon picked by Thomas Baker as secretary to the Committee and, like Axon, he became the mainstay at Campfield, in his case in the Reference Library. When Axon left in 1874, he became Sub Librarian.

Both Baker and Crestadoro were major influences in his life. Crestadoro's key principles of being light with rules and that libraries were there to be used, were taken forward by Sutton, especially in his championship of open access. He was much loved by his staff and apparently only ever had problems with a couple of individuals, perhaps Hands and Boughey.

Did Sutton ever try to undermine Crestadoro? It appears not, for his comments on how he covered Crestadoro's work were only made after Crestadoro's death. Sutton was devoted to the Manchester Libraries, mortified if anything went wrong as when the money was stolen from his desk, and loyal to his colleagues.

There was also family involvement too: his father, Thomas Sutton, was a second-hand bookseller and his brother carried on the business. Another brother, John Sutton, was employed in the Libraries but suffered from ill health and died in service.

Like Axon, Sutton contributed entries to *DNB*, wrote histories and was active in the LA. Like Axon he was a vegetarian and campaigned for humane treatment of animals. He was not, however, a Unitarian but an active church worker, senior Churchwarden at the Cathedral, and a prominent Freemason.

## W.R. Credland (1850-1916)

There is little of W.R. Credland's personality to be extracted from the Minutes or Letters. He started as a boy assistant in 1866, rose to be Sutton's Deputy and was active in the LA. Credland was the historian of Manchester Public Libraries and recorded memories of John Potter, Thomas Baker and Crestadoro whom he regarded with affection.

Like Axon, Credland was a member of the Manchester Literary Club, acting as its Hon. Secretary for many years and with a light, humorous touch. He merited an obituary in the *Manchester Evening News*, Wednesday 19 July 1916:

> DEATH OF MR. W. R. CREDLAND. Fifty Years' Service in City Libraries. The news of the death of Mr. W. R. Credland, who last year resigned the position of Deputy Chief Librarian of Manchester after holding that office for nearly fifty years, will be received

> with widespread regret. Mr. Credland had been in failing health for the last five years, and it was this fact which led to his resignation as deputy the chief of his department, though he remained in its service until his death yesterday at the age of 66 years. He was appointed assistant librarian as long ago as 1865 and accepted the position of Deputy Chief Librarian in 1886. In the same year he became secretary of the Manchester Literary Club, and he held that office until last year. He was well known and appreciated in literary circles. The Libraries Committee of the Manchester Corporation, at their meeting, to-day, passed a resolution of sympathy with the relatives of the late Mr. Credland.

## Joseph Radford, a Particular friend

Joseph R. Radford was another high-flyer in Crestadoro's team, starting as a boy assistant and becoming branch librarian at Campfield Lending Library in 1865, resigning in July 1876.

An assistant, Thomas William Hand, who had joined in 1866, was then appointed to the post but he does not seem to have been of the same calibre as Radford. One reader wrote in 1877 of being upset by Mr. Hand. He praised Radford and the courtesy of assistants: he had been a regular borrower for twenty years but had his ticket stopped by Mr. Hand for having two books out at once in the past, as had been agreed by Radford. The reader, Sam J. Seed, found Hand has a very offensive manner: 'so very different to his predecessor' but was prepared to give up tickets if insisted on but, tellingly, only to Crestadoro. (Mr.Hand was later dismissed by Sutton after he refused to resign: he became librarian at Oldham and then Leeds.)

Radford's poignant story is covered in the final chapter.

## Managing the Team

The branch librarians were expected to deliver efficient services, demonstrate high levels of use and to produce accurate statistics and reports. They had to deal promptly with difficult assistants and readers, keep the stock in useable condition, sort out building and security problems, but also to be careful to consult on all their actions with Crestadoro, his deputies or with the Committee. It was Crestadoro's task to set all the holidays for Campfield, always an onerous business, and the branch librarians had to have Crestadoro confirm their proposed arrangements.

John Pink, of Cambridge, once asked Crestadoro how he related to the branch librarians. It is a pity his reply has not survived.

Crestadoro had his protégés at Campfield as well as in the branches, and some of these became high achievers who went on to have illustrious careers and influenced the new library movement. Axon and Sutton as his deputies in the Reference Library, Credland, Henry Allpass, Lawrence Dillon, Joseph Radford from the branches all played significant parts.

His protégés became a credit to Crestadoro: how intriguing this Italian inventor and master of catalogues must have seemed to them as boy assistants.

The branch librarians were careful to be subservient, but were tempted occasionally into divide and rule games, courting Thomas Baker rather than Crestadoro. As Crestadoro was careful never to jeopardise his position with Baker this did not really work.

## Meal Times

One such incident involves the delicate matter of mealtimes. As anyone knows who has worked in large organisations holidays, start and finish times, rotas, tea breaks and meal breaks are delicate

areas: sudden changes without wide consultation can spell disaster. There is so little employees can control in their working lives that such arrangements are of critical importance.

Chadwick, of the Hulme Branch Library, does not feature largely in the Letter Books; he may have preferred to run the library with minimal consultation, but he sent Crestadoro a note in November 1869 about a change he had agreed with Baker if Crestadoro approved. A better approach would have been to suggest the change to Crestadoro for consultation with the other branch librarians, and then to forward an agreed proposal to Baker. Chadwick wrote as follows:

> Some time ago I suggested to Mr Baker the desirableness of the meal times of the Branch libraries being altered. I intimated that 1 o'clock for dinner and 5 o'clock for tea would both be more satisfactory to the Librarians and conducive to the interests of the Libraries. I have again mentioned the matter to him and he kindly consented the proposed change subject to your approval hoping I may meet with your assent.

Crestadoro tactfully forwarded this to the other branch librarians for their opinion. Bellhouse responded with a modification: 'no objection to the dinner time being altered from 12 to 1 but the tea-hour should likewise have been changed from 5-30 to 6-30. As it is I shall get back from dinner at 3 o'clock and leave again for tea at 4.30.'

Mitchell pointed out that there is a system of alternate dinner hours for the assistants at Ancoats. As ever, Mitchell had grievances and he asked whether he might have a dispensation for winter to bring his dinner and tea together:

> to conjoin my dinner and tea hours. To have to go away to tea in 3 half-hours after returning from dinner, and to travel over the same ground as I had done between 1 & 3 which occupies me 15 … a journey I would rather avoid. PS My complaint is now yielding to the treatment and if happily there be no relapse I shall be in the library Monday morning.

This correspondence, so apparently trivial, is revealing, not just of internal office politics but also of everyday life. Dinner was still traditionally eaten at midday and tea at late afternoon. People generally walked to and from work, though by now the horse omnibuses were running in Manchester. But fares would cost, as would the alternative of buying food at eating-houses. It also shows how long the working day was, from morning into late evening, awkwardly broken by the meal times. It is interesting that there seems to be an allocation of time for getting home, given Bellhouse wrote of leaving at 4.30.

## Punctuality

The branch librarians were used to fielding complaints, whether from the public, the Committee, from Crestadoro or his deputies, who had dropped in and found something not to their liking. The rules were strict and those with authority, or delegated authority such as Axon and Sutton, had to be obeyed.

Chadwick again seems forthright and independent, and very good at wrong footing in return, throwing back embarrassing facts that justified his actions. The undercurrent of this letter is resentment both at Sutton's role as Crestadoro's front man and at interference with his branch, though he is very careful to avoid overheated phrasing. Again this sort of thing is familiar in work situations and Chadwick clearly was not someone to confront. This may explain why he appears infrequently in the Letter Books:

> I have been requested by Mr. Sutton to inform you on what authority I have put down 8/15 am instead of 8/0 am as the time for my assistants' morning arrival. I can only say that to the best of my knowledge (crossed out) belief their time has always begun as at present and I am not aware it was ever before fifteen ?? Either by yourself or the Committee until about six months since when, in accordance with your instructions, I submitted a statement of our time – similar to the one forwarded to you yesterday – which received the sanction of the Cttee. I may add that my assistants are very punctual in their attendance and that 15 minutes is found ample time in which to prepare the place for opening.

## Salary

Every summer there were letters from staff requesting salary increases. These usually took a standard form, but as with other mundane letters in the collection they sometimes provide personal details and help identify individuals and length of service. One letter is exceptional in that three people have joined together asking Crestadoro to support them: Joseph Radford, Benjamin Chadwick and George Boughey. The joint request shows both a good relationship between the three and Crestadoro. This is letter, dated 20 July 1875:

> We beg to hand you an application for an increase of Salary and shall feel much obliged if you will kindly submit it at the next meeting of the Committee. We had each an intention of applying, but after thinking the matter over, decided to make a joint application, seeing that the Committee would have a preliminary consideration of any application from us. May we ask your kind interest and support for which we shall feel truly grateful.

Sadly for them, on 25 July, the Free Libraries Committee resolved: 'That the applications of the Branch librarians of the Campfield, Hulme and Chorlton Branch libraries for an advance of salary be not entertained.'

Crestadoro always took care to ensure staff were properly paid for additional work, such as the evacuation of books from Campfield or for Sunday working. Most assistants were happy to have the extra pay for Sundays and there was no coercion with sufficient Jewish staff to cover.[527]

## Welfare

Generally the branch librarians worked co-operatively with Crestadoro, Axon and Sutton and consulted between themselves. The branch librarians worked closely with their assistants, were concerned for their welfare and gave them to discuss appropriate matters with their families. One example is when Axon is trying to find out whether staff wanted to contribute to 'Hospital Saturday'. The responses from Ancoats and Rochdale outline what staff will give – Miss Haywood, H. Allpass and Mr Dillon are down for 1/- at Ancoats, Mills, W. H. Smith give 1/1, Miss Brersford and Miss Dalton -/6 and John and Mrs Kinsey -/3.

The variation obviously reflects different salary levels. Boughey's letter dated 19 January 1872 from the Chorlton and Ardwick Branch gives a more detailed account; interesting in showing how vital individual salaries were to the family income:

> Dear Axon
>
> I should have answered your favour of yesterday at once but my assistants did not seem free to decide upon the matter of the 'Hospital Saturday' without consulting their parents. I have spoken to them again on the matter this morning and they now say that they all go to some place of worship on the Sunday and have given to the 'Hospital Sunday' fund each

> year, that they cannot afford to give to both funds and prefer giving to the Sunday fund. I may add that I approve of their decision as I am in the same position myself.

The assistants were allowed to earn money by private copying for individual readers. Crestadoro points this service out to one correspondent: clearly it would be particularly useful to anyone living outside Manchester. It was very much Crestadoro's approach that Manchester Libraries served anyone who wanted help, not just Mancunians. An A. J. Lowe wrote to Crestadoro in some desperation from 23 Cromford Street, Nottingham that he has failed to track anything down for his family history, particularly on R. Lowe: 'the present Chancellor', (Letter 69/185 undated). On the back is a pencilled draft note as follows:

> Mr Crestadoro (Chief Librarian) has placed yr letter in my hands. I have to inform you Walford's County Families does not contain any history – Lowes of Hulme – Pierrepoint, Notts & I account it gives Rt Hon R Lowe is so brief I do not think it will be of any service to you. If however you wish to have a transcript of it, one of our assistants will copy it out for you in his own time for 1/6. If you will send stamps for it .. it shall be forwarded forthwith.

There are several complaints from readers on perceived favouritism, particularly for those skipping the queue for popular books, as well as complaints about staff keeping them under the counter for themselves and friends. Perhaps bribery was involved for there is a stern approach towards gratuities. There is a draft letter with a note to it from Crestadoro to be copied to all the branches regarding gratuities. This is dated August 17 1870:

> It has come to my knowledge that money and other gifts have been accepted by assistants in the lending libraries. On this occasion I forbear to name or report them as I … ignorance of the fact. I have also to request that you will impress upon your assistants that their first and most important duty is to attend promptly to the wants of the borrower..

It is quite rare to find such a directive from Crestadoro in the Letter Books, surprising given the very hierarchical and authoritarian nature of the organization. Crestadoro seems to have largely trusted his branch librarians to operate within a system of consultation and regular spot checks from the councillors, himself or his deputies.

The recurring surnames and requests also show how throughout the new library service it was common for other members of the family to be employed; brothers and sisters join older siblings or sometimes in the case of sickness replace them.

## Sickness

There was a surprising degree of support for staff in periods of illness.

Crestadoro in particular seems to have gone out of his way to comfort staff and their families, and it is only when there is little hope of return to work that the person was replaced. There are several letters that evidence how much Crestadoro's kindness is appreciated. It is apparent from the Minutes and Letters that it was up to the discretion of the Committee, and probably reliant on Crestadoro's opinion, whether salary should continue during illness or not.

There are many sick notes in the Letter Books, accompanied by a doctor's note if the person could afford to pay for treatment. Hospitals too, provided confirmation of sickness. There is an abrupt note from the Royal Eye Hospital on 22 March 1872: 'Bearer came to my hands about a fortnight since and was told to see me the day after at the Eye Hospital. He never appeared and his eye is

scarcely better today than it was then.'

Not surprisingly in polluted Manchester, the sick notes record a high level of respiratory illnesses, as well as fevers, upset stomachs, accidents, eye problems, and what is probably exhaustion or nervous collapse. Parents or siblings often sent in notes to inform of absence. Grace Mandsley wrote in January 1872 that her son is suffering from cold and bronchitis: there must have been many such at this time of year.

There was always the anxiety of possible loss of employment, especially when a library assistant's wage, low as it was, would have been critical to the family. Crestadoro was helpful with keeping the wage in the family by allowing relatives to cover for absent assistants (Minutes October 18 1875):

> Rochdale
>
> The Branch Librarian reported that his senior assistant Miss Dalton had been away from duty on account of illness since October 4th and that with the Chief Librarian's consent Miss Dalton had sent her younger sister to take her place at the Library.

An assistant, R. Ferguson sends in a sick note for 'Tic-dolereux' in 1864. He is next encountered needing an evening off when he should be working to appear in a dramatic performance at the Manchester Athenaeum 1865. There is a note around April 1865, followed by a doctor's certificate, that he has a 'swelling in the loins' and cannot walk. He then resigned. It does not sound as if he were forced to give up his post for he writes to Crestadoro: 'Thanking you and Mr Bellhouse for the kindness I have received during the last 4 years.'

Like the requests for salary increases and the mentions in particular incidents, the sick notes enable glimpses of individual history. Radford who, as we shall see in the last chapter, had a particular relationship with Crestadoro sent in a sick note in 1866 for 'affection of a liver'. Axon as a boy assistant also sent in a sick note on July 11 1866. In 1869 there is a sick note from Axon to Crestadoro on one side of a sheet of paper and a specification for the printing of the catalogue on the other; work which Axon was heavily involved in. Given Axon's precarious childhood, his consequent frail health and his love of his work, this note is particularly poignant: 'My illness has left me so very weak that I have not yet ventured out of doors at all. I am very anxious to get back to work but am afraid…'

More mundane are sick notes that are as familiar today as they were back in the nineteenth century. Here is W R Barclay writing in 1871: 'I wish you to excuse me today as I am not able to come. I was taken ill with the Bowel complaint last night & I think I shall be able to come tomorrow morning. But if I am taken worse through the day I will let you know.'

Even the branch librarians supplied sick notes. Mills at Rochdale Road wrote to Crestadoro on 19 February 19 1874 as follows: 'I beg to inform you that I have been away from the library since Tuesday suffering from a severe cold. But I will endeavor to get back tomorrow or Saturday morning. I enclose a certificate from Dr. Heusen, Harpurhey.'

Boughey of the Rusholme Road Branch seems to have some sort of collapse and was ill for quite a period. Crestadoro's sympathy during Mr. Boughey's illness earned him the gratitude of his concerned wife:

> Mr. Boughey and myself feel much indebted to you for your kind message delivered through Mr. Radford. It has relieved him of much uneasiness as he has been fretting about his absence from the library. He is still very unwell and very weak and cannot bear the

> least excitement but the doctor thinks that the air at Lytham will do him good. I earnestly think it will.

On 5 June 1874, Mr. Boughey was sufficiently recovered to write himself to Crestadoro from Lytham: 'I am sorry to have been away so long. It would have troubled me very much but for your kindness and sympathy, for which I feel, and always shall feel, very grateful.'

Sensibly, Boughey returned to work at his own pace: Crestadoro put no pressure on him in the long recovery period. Boughey wrote to Crestadoro on 22 June 1874, full of gratitude and confident in reporting his weakness. Crestadoro was not the sort of person to get rid of someone just for illness: 'The Doctor does not wish me to begin work for a fortnight but I am very anxious to begin. '

## Cover

The Manchester Free Libraries were on a tight budget for staff as the frequent complaints of low wages and requests for increases denote. The difficulty of covering holidays and mealtimes and ensuring opening times are strictly kept are apparent from the many letters on such topics.

It is to Crestadoro's credit that his staff were generally keen to help out or take the initiative to avoid problems. Henry Allpass was one of the brightest of Crestadoro's team. When Lawrence Dillon at the Ancoats Branch was taken ill, 'with severe pains in his head and chest' on 28 January 1876, his brother, John Dillon, activated cover for him with Henry Allpass taking charge at Ancoats. Dillon was still ill on the next day and Allpass offered to carry on at Ancoats and to try to help out at Campfield. As he wrote to Sutton on 29 January 1876: 'As the Library closes at five there will be no need for me to be here after that time and if you think you will be shorthanded at Campfield I can come down after leaving Ancoats at five.'On the 31 January Lawrence Dillon was still at home at 3 Beech Terrace but obviously concerned about cover for his branch as he wrote to Crestadoro:

> I am still confined to my bedroom. The doctor says that some few days must elapse ere I leave the house as I am suffering also with an attack of Bronchitis. Miss Carter, I understand is likely to be absent another week. Therefore I think it would be advisable for Allpass to remain at the library until I am able to return.

## Death

This sad note is from the Chief Librarian's Office on 24 April 1878: 'Mr Crestadoro regrets to report that John Helsdon Locking, one of the Assistants in the Reference Library, was drowned yesterday morning (Sunday April 23rd) while bathing in the canal.'

Another tragedy is recorded in a black-edged letter from Thomas Glyn sent to Sutton in November 1878:

> I am requested by the Sisters and Aunt of the late William Cathcart to thank you for the kind interest which you took in the deceased during his short service under you. We would also beg (through you) to thank the Chairman and Committee to allow the deceased to receive his salary during his illness, which, I can assure you, obtained for him as many of the little necessaries which he so much required.

Sutton received the letter as Secretary to the Committee but it would have been Crestadoro who made the recommendation to Baker. Despite William Cathcart being seriously ill and unlikely to return, despite his short service, he was supported in his last days, even with the wine the doctor recommended. The Committee and Crestadoro always ensured the Free Libraries were within

budget and the ratepayer's money responsibly used but their hearts were in the right place. It is also likely that Miss Cathcart was William's sister and so part of the Free Library family as well.

It should also be considered that these were small organisations in terms of today's Public Library structures: around thirty to forty staff were employed at this stage and most would be well known to each other.

## Holidays

As with sickness the Minutes and Letter Books evidence an informal approach gradually firming up into rules. Sickness and the need for a break were often linked before formal leave allowances came in.

By 1861, branch librarians were allowed to grant their assistants a week's holiday when they could best be spared but it is only as late as 18 December 1866 that the Minutes record, following Crestadoro's suggestion, that assistants should formally have a half day per week at 1 o'clock and one full day per month. Crestadoro was sympathetic to the need for breaks; he identified in his report on the boy assistants that one cause of dissatisfaction was not having time for education. When he could, he went out of his way to help staff. The Minutes for 25 April 1866 record William Wild at Rochdale Road being granted one night per week absence: 'to afford him an opportunity of attending a Night School'.

Staff were entitled to a couple of weeks leave, though the exact allocation varied according to rank and time of service. The need for cover meant there could be problems with the half holidays as well as the long leave breaks, and any unauthorised absence was a serious matter. Any request for a change had to be authorised at the highest level. In July 1871 Credland, Branch Librarian at Cheetham, requested permission to consolidate his half holidays for the next three weeks so he can take the following Saturday to Monday as leave: 'I wish most particularly to go to Blackpool during those days.' Crestadoro was agreeable to the proposal but careful to advise Credland to also check with Baker. As Credland explained in his letter to Baker, Crestadoro: 'would rather I asked your permission.'

The Committee was generally sympathetic to valued staff, and leave of absence was granted for all sorts of crises. The Minutes for 29 July 1868 record a request from the Mills: 'The Librarian reported that on account of a death in his family he had been absent from the Library a few days in the preceding week, and asked permission for a few additional days absence which was granted.'

Mills seems to put his staff first in holiday arrangements: he wrote to Crestadoro in late August 1873 (Letter 42/68) requesting to take his break in September:

> With your kind permission I wish to commence my holidays on Monday September 1st. All my Assistants have had their holidays so that I can make all necessary arrangements for the management of the Library during my absences. I have made out all the figures for the Annual Report up to the present date and if required I can come back on the 15th Monday and complete the report.
>
> PS It will not be convenient for my Assistants to have their half day holidays during my absence without your special permission.

The long break was precious. Most staff took their holidays in the summer period, with chance of the best weather. Even the punctilious Sutton sounds light hearted on holiday when he wrote to Crestadoro from Edinburgh on 4 July 1871 for permission to take an extra day:

> Excepting the sea-passage which was a very fine one of 17 and a half hours we have, so far, not had nice weather but we have not withstanding enjoyed the sights of the busy streets of Glasgow and the grand and historic monuments of this beautiful city. I hope you will grant me the favour I ask and remain
>
> Yours most truly
>
> C W Sutton

Given there is so little of a personal nature in the Letter Books it is good to find this missive from Sutton, in little doubt he will get his extra day and eager to share the excitement of his holiday with his Chief.

## Crestadoro's Jaunts

Like his staff Crestadoro relished holidays away from the Manchester pollution. It seems miraculous when anything personal from Crestadoro survives: it is only his letters chasing up deliveries of newspapers to his hotels that gives us these glances and a hint of his genial humour. It is not clear whether Mrs. Crestadoro accompanied him on these trips, but his pleasure in holiday freedom and expeditions is indisputable. He had a predilection for the seaside. As ever Crestadoro is enthusiastic and full of a simple spirit of enjoyment.

On 10 July 1868 he wrote to Axon from Claridge House, Nelson Street, Ryde, Isle of Wight. The house still exists; a lovely large Georgian terrace in a select street close to Ryde centre, a perfect base for a holiday: Karl Marx lived opposite. Presumably the householder provided rooms as superior holiday lets. Ryde was a fashionable seaside resort and it is understandable why Crestadoro, like many others before and since, was keen to explore delights of the Isle of Wight. There were innumerable literary associations, geology at The Needles, Alum Bay, dinosaur footprints and fossils, trains crossing the islands, Carisbroke Castle: the island has countless attractions and of course had been popularized by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert with their family home at Osborne. Crestadoro clearly revelled in it:

> My Dear Mr Axon
>
> I have been very much pleased in receiving your note of the 6th inst and thank you for the enclosures. With this I send by Book post for your acceptance a copy of a pamphlet explanatory of my 'exhibit' at the exhibition of the Aeronautical Exhibition at the Crystal Palace. Should there be any private letters for me, please send them here direct up to Wednesday next, and after this date to London as before. I am just 'doing' the Isle of Wight, truly the Italy of England: no smoke, the sky so lovely and the scenery and vegetation so charming. Trusting, as I have not the least doubt, that everything in the Chief Library goes on smooth under your care, I remain My Dear Sir
>
> Yours Very Sincerely
>
> A Crestadoro

On August 28 1872 he wrote to Axon in a similar light-hearted vein from the Royal Hotel Harrogate: 'I have just arrived from the Queen of the Seasides to this delightful place…I shall stay at least a week if not longer.' A note from the Post Office of 31 August identifies the Queen of the Seasides as Scarborough where Crestadoro had stayed at the resplendent Royal Hotel. He sent a second letter to Axon on 2 September, and ended again with a cheerful note:

> I intend shifting my quarters in the course of the week and if I cast ancor [sic] long enough

> to wait for any letters or communications you may have to send me I will let you know. Probably in my cruise I may repass through Manchester. If I do I will come to see you. Meanwhile please to remember me to Mr. Sutton and Mr.Radford.

The handwriting is less careful than usual and there are blotches; he was definitely in holiday mood.

## Dangers

As public buildings open to all, libraries have always attracted difficult, or on occasion dangerous, individuals. Axon, Credland and Sutton make no mention of this in their histories of Manchester Free Libraries but emphasise instead the haven of the Reading Rooms and the opportunities the collections provided for self education and betterment as well as relaxation and relief from hard lives. Axon in particular was proud to highlight the classless nature of the Reading Rooms.

Manchester has always had a reputation as a dangerous city and the first Free Libraries were situated in the grimmest districts. Campfield was close to the notorious red light district of Cupid's Alley, now renamed as Atkinson Street. One of Axon's correspondents referred to 'horrid walk' to Campfield.[528] How far did the libraries matter to the local residents? To some they were a miracle, to many irrelevant and to others a place to loiter, mock and generally cause trouble.

Given that many of the staff came from similar neighbourhoods they dealt well with the incidents that arose. In a few cases there was little difference between the boys who caused trouble as assistants and those who loitered outside and annoyed readers.

The Minutes and Letters record a dark history of sexual predators, thieves, drunkards, gangs and violence as well as some bullying amongst the staff. The frustrations of readers under the humiliating closed access system, the overcrowding, the foul atmosphere, anger at indifferent or rude assistants could all erupt into frightening scenes. Women readers suffered occasional mockery and harassment.

As well as violent assistants, doorstep loiterers who needed dispersal by the police, assaults in the streets, there were the readers who threatened staff. This was 'not very pleasant' as one assistant, Beard, reported on 9 January 1873 after regular incidents at Campfield:

> This man H Eccles applied for Chambers Journal this evening which was given him. Soon after he had obtained it he was found sleeping and awoke by Maundsley but took no notice of it, and about a quarter of an hour afterwards I found him sleeping again, took away from him, awoke him and told him he must go of which he took no notice. I had to tell him ?? times and he replied he would punch me in the b----dy snuff box. I asked him what he did and he replied if he saw me outside he would punch me in the b---dy .. He makes it a practice to come here to go to sleep and when awake tells those who awake him something similar to that he said to me which is not very pleasant.

Some incidents with the drunkards sound amusing, but the potential was always there for such situations to turn nasty. The Librarians and staff had to be ready to handle these situations, with the aid of the porter, or at last resort, the police. Radford reported a typical situation (Minutes 18 October 1875): 'I beg to report that last Wednesday afternoon about 4 o'clock a man named Johnson who resides in Lloyd Street Hulme came into the Campfield Newsroom in a drunken state. He took an apple out of his pocket and began to lecture on it to the people in the room.'

In the end Radford sent for a policeman; the magistrate gave Johnson the option of a month's

imprisonment or a fine and he took the fine of 40/-.

Crestadoro did not hide in his office: he confronted troublemakers. The Minutes for 16 November 1864 record how he went with the porter to deal with rioting gangs of boys.

The notes record violence and tragedy. Bellhouse reports to Crestadoro on 5 December 1865 that his assistant Albert Moorsanger has been attacked by five men on the Sunday evening and: 'seriously kicked about the body, watch, money etc taken and left insensible.' Bellhouse wrote that they are: 'very busy but will manage if he has a few days off'. However, Bellhouse visited the boy on 11 December and found him very ill.

The libraries also attracted the sexual predators and there was no naïvety in knowing what they were about. Radford had to deal with a man who committed two indecent assaults on readers, one a boy whom he then bribed 'not to speak of it' and the other a man who responded with violence. Radford reported to Crestadoro on 25 August 1874 that he had banned him.

The Minutes for 26 June 1878 record this incident at Chorlton: 'The Librarian reported that some time since complaints were made to him that a respectable looking elderly man was in the habit of coming here and inducing youths to go out with him for the purpose of committing an unnatural offence.'

The Librarian had been surprised that this was indeed a respectable man, a former Governor of Chetham's Hospital, but fortunately he did not hesitate to contact the police. The Committee banned James Bury from all the libraries.

## Difficult Readers

Difficult readers trail through the whole history of the Manchester Library Service – names of serial complainers become familiar. Edwards was so enraged by one reader that he ended up in court for assault: though acquitted, this incident must have embarrassed the Committee.

Crestadoro had a reputation for always being courteous and the Letter Books bear this out. As we have seen, he dealt routinely with complaints, was thanked for his scholarly help and developed particular friendships. He had the ability to pacify irate readers whilst investigating matters, and wherever possible defended and supported his staff. On 13 August 1877, in the stressful period of the collapse of Campfield and the dispersal of books, he accepted that a reader's complaint was valid. Crestadoro went on, however, to point out the strain the assistants were under:

> I must, however, plead for your consideration for the Assistants who have lately been over-worked in consequence of the increased numbers of readers who have used the library since the closing of the Campfield Library. It cannot be a matter of wonder that out of a monthly issue of between 10,000 and 12,000 volumes (the majority of which are given out at night) there should be now and then a mistake.

But there were some readers who must have pushed him to the limit and even well over a hundred years later there is one who needs to be named and shamed. The inherent cruelty of this letter, dated 24 November 1864, illustrates horribly the tyranny of the employer and the desperate need for escape through books:

> Ada Villa, Old Trafford
>
> Sir,
>
> I would venture to suggest - that domestic servants should not be allowed to have books out of the Free Library, without an authority from their Master or Mistress.
>
> My grounds for addressing this suggestion are these.
>
> On the 21st (Monday last) I discharged a Nurse Maid from this house for gross neglect of duty coupled with dishonesty - Her name was Harriet Booth.
>
> In her bedroom we found a 3 volume novel from The Free Library, Hulme. We discovered that this girl was in the habit of reading in bed - and availing herself of every absence of her Mistress to 'devour' novels.
>
> I cannot believe the Committee of the Free Library intend that excellent Institution to be made available for the amusement of idle sluts-such as this girl - and it is evident that any young woman can obtain books without any difficulty, and is proved in this instance.
>
> I respectfully submit that young women having the appearance of servants should, on presenting a form and applying for Books, be asked the question whether they be in service - and if for that a note from their employers must be advanced - giving their sanction in addition to the sureties required under the present system.
>
> I am Sir
>
> Your Obedient Servant
>
> James Collins
> The Chairman and Committee
> Free Library
> Hulme Branch
>
> PS I returned the 3 books found in this girl's possession to the Library - with a note to the Librarian

There is no record of how James Collins was dealt with which suggests Crestadoro did not deem the proposal even worth bringing to the attention of the Committee.

Other readers seemed to resent the librarians and assistants being in authority and clearly wished to treat them as servants; this arrogance must have been hard to bear. A long rambling letter, dated 18 October 1872, the last part of which is illegible, was sent to Crestadoro from a reader at 59 Queens Road. The language the reader used suggests all the fault was on his side; the courteous Mr Mills is an unlikely culprit: 'I was instantly threatened with expulsion and he waxed very wroth – I then gave intimation that he was an impertinent puppy then I was threatened with a policeman'.

Mills struggled with what was obviously a difficult neighbourhood. On 10 March 1875, he wrote to Crestadoro to explain why only one assistant was present. It looks from the detail as if the assistants are now mostly female:

> One of them was away for her half day, another was at tea. I had also gone to tea a little earlier than usual having to call respecting an outstanding book and Miss Walton finding we had no vouchers had gone to the Cheetham Branch for a temporary supply. I have to go after many outstanding books personally both Borrowers and Guarantors remove so frequently in this district without advising us, that it is often two and three hours work to

> find these out, and some of these reside in such low and objectionable neighbourhoods, that I cannot ask my female assistants to go searching after them.

There are regular letters criticising the assistants. Crestadoro always investigated and replied promptly. A typical example is from W. Healey who encountered several annoying barriers to renewing his card at the Campfield Library. He makes reference to the 'precocious juveniles in attendance' and added (4 January1875) that:

> more than once I have been subject to annoyance & occasionally to incivility & impertinence from the young attendants who seem to think they are licensed to do just as they like – but I have not complained until now – I only ask you may have the kindness to see that such blundering in this case is rectified and enable me to avail myself of the privilege I am entitled to without further trouble.

Scribbled on the back of his letter is a note from an HR denying all the problems and stating: 'I am unaware of any improper behaviour to complainant on the part of my assistants.' Crestadoro, however, sent a courteous reply and appeased W. Healey by sorting out the mistake. Healey dropped the complaint with a warning there must be no re-occurrence (Letter 62, February 1875):

> In reference to the incivility I have seen & received I would rather prefer to let it pass for the present. I don't wish to be the means of causing unpleasantness where it can be avoided but I venture to hope they will be more cautious in future. If on the other hand I have to make another complaint, I promise you, I shall do so in very specific terms.

It is interesting that W. Healey also comments in his letter that if he had not been so busy he would have: 'seen you personally instead of writing'. This suggests that Crestadoro was both accessible to his readers and well respected by them. Edwards' failure to be visible to readers was one of the reasons for his dismissal. Crestadoro may have been reclusive towards the end with regards to his staff but never to readers.

## Ladies Room

The only recorded instance of Crestadoro's wrath against a reader is when he found a woman sewing in the Ladies Room. He reported this in strong terms to the Committee (Minutes 11 October 1871):

> Mr Crestadoro reported that on the 17th (September?) at about half past five o'clock he looked in at the Ladies Compartment and found a woman seated there with a work-basket by her and engaged in sewing. She had no book or newspaper by her. The Librarian was instructed not to permit any person to use the library in the manner indicated in Mr Crestadoro's report, and to have anyone so offending removed by the police if necessary.

Crestadoro's reaction may seem excessive but it is revealing: access to libraries, particularly for women, had been a hard and fraught battle. For Crestadoro, who was so proud of the collections and services, supportive of education for women, this must have been a real insult. I must admit on behalf of all those girls forced away from books into dreary hours of samplers and needlework, my heart warms to Crestadoro. Though of course like the boys escaping from their cellars, the Ladies Room may have be sheltering some poor girl trying to eke a pitiful living as a seamstress.

One of the issues that exercised the first Free Librarians was whether women should have access to the general rooms or have a Reading Room reserved for their use.

The Committee and Crestadoro sensibly took a consultative approach on whether a separate Ladies

Room was desirable. On 27 September 1871 the Committee responded to Miss Becker, of Suffragette fame: 'that the Librarian believes that most of the ladies frequenting the library prefer the separate compartment but that they will cause a notice to be exhibited that the General Newsrooms as well as the separate apartment is entirely free to ladies.'

Crestadoro's liberal policy sparked off much interest. One such example is the letter of 29 November 1871 from the Librarian of the Liberton Branch, Edinburgh:

> I am told that in all your 'Free Libraries' Women are admitted to the Reading and Newsrooms. Might I ask if you will kindly give me any information you can on the working of this system. An Institution is opening this for both sides of the town, and a majority of Directors are in favour of admitting to the general Newsroom but there is a strong prejudice against this in the minority. They wish to have a separate Reading Room for Ladies. I am therefore anxious for information that will strengthen the hands of the majority.

## Praise from Baker

On the opening of the Chorlton and Ardwick Branch on 6 October 1866, the usual congratulatory ceremonies were held. Credland included the speeches in his history, and for once Crestadoro gets a mention and from no less a personage as Thomas Baker:

> And now that he had mentioned the name of Mr Crestadoro, he thought he ought not to allow the opportunity to pass without bearing his humble testimony to the zeal, the ability, and the unpretending demeanour of that gentleman. If the libraries had been a success, he deserved to share the credit of it equally with the Free Libraries.[529]

Baker had cause to be grateful to Crestadoro. Not only had he delivered the Reference Library Catalogue and won fame for Manchester Free Libraries, but he had forged a good team of staff to take the organisation forward. Edwards had been too difficult and obstreperous, whilst Smiles had managed but had not inspired. The 'unpretending demeanour' is significant: the genial Crestadoro had the ability to deal with all sorts of prickly and sensitive characters and seems to have moved across heavy ground lightly.

[516] *Manchester Public Free Libraries, Report of the proceedings at the laying of the corner stone, on Thursday, May 11th, 1876; and at the opening of the Cheetham Branch library on Monday, February 11th, 1878; also at a meeting on occasion of the removal of the Reference Library from Campfield to the Old Town Hall*, *Manchester* (Manchester, 1878) p.17

[517] Robert Walmsley, 'Dr. Axon – Manchester Bookman', Manchester Review, Summer-Autumn (1964) pp.138-154

[518] Thomas Greenwood, *Edward Edwards the Chief Pioneer of Municipal Public Libraries*, (London: Scott, 1902) p. 113

[519] Greenwood, *Edward Edwards*, p.125

[520] Greenwood, *Edward Edwards*, p. 113

[521] W.G. Fry, 'The Manchester Public Libraries 1852-1938', *Manchester Review*, Summer (1938) pp.288-300

[522] UML, W.E.A. Axon Papers 1070

[523] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.94

[524] Greenwood, *Edward Edwards*, p.125

[525] W.A. Munford, *Who Was Who in British Librarianship 1800-1985 A Dictionary of Dates with Notes* (London: LA, 1987) p.42

[526] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.104

[527] Kelly, *History of Public Libraries*, p.43

[528] UMP, W.E.A Axon Papers, 810

[529] Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, p.76

# Chapter Twenty-One: A Host of Young Women

> They are regular in their attendance, attentive to their duties, uniformly courteous to borrowers, and contented with their employment and position, evincing no disposition to leave. Few of them have left, except on such causes as bad health or being about to marry. The relief to the chairman of the committee is, I can assure you, very great; for there are now few changes, and if a vacancy does occur, there are many applicants for it. (Thomas Baker)[530]

## Manchester's Experiment

Manchester was famously the first amongst the Free Libraries to employ women as an alternative to the boy assistants. Thomas Baker and Crestadoro were the instigators of this trial. They placed the following advertisement in the *Manchester Guardian* of 5 September 1871: 'Manchester Public Free Libraries.—Wanted, a respectable, intelligent young woman as assistant in the Free Libraries. Apply to the Chief Librarian, Campfield.'

Baker commented in his paper at the 1879 LA Conference that had this been an advertisement for boys, there would have been very few applicants. As it was they had: 'a host of young women candidates'.[531]

The Manchester experience aroused much interest but other Library Committees were nervous of the change. The large towns were slow to follow: Bradford, Bristol, Aberdeen and Leeds (1898) were the first. Smaller libraries were more likely to employ women, perhaps because of the economic factor, but it was not until the first decade of the twentieth century that there was marked progress.

Public Libraries were critically significant as a source of new and respectable employment for middle class girls. Despite Baker's complacency, women were not forever content with their low wages and inferior positions. By the turn of the century although women represented only twelve per cent of library staff in Britain, there were twenty-five female Chief Librarians, such as Miss Kate Lewis of Blackpool and Miss Mary C. Scott of Doncaster. In Manchester there has never been a female Chief Librarian, but women soon moved into senior assistant or branch librarian posts. The feminisation of the public libraries is a rich subject for study as the growing number of articles reflects.

Given the significance of the step, the actual story of the employment of women in the Manchester Free Libraries as seen through the Minutes and Letters is surprisingly low key. The employment of women was the solution to the problem of boy assistants that had plagued the Free Libraries from the start, and in Crestadoro's time reached a crisis point. At one stage there was even a risk the experiment might have ceased, but Crestadoro saved the day. None of this is mentioned in Thomas Baker's speech to the LA Conference, which is the main source for modern studies.

Nor should it be forgotten that women were employed in the Free Libraries from the very start as charwomen: their work was critical to the comfort of readers and there are even instances in the Manchester Letters where they gave a hand to the boy assistants.

## The Boy Assistants

The Chief Librarians, deputies and branch librarians of the first Free Libraries had to figure out their roles in a new profession, with varying success. Many of the boy assistants too had little idea of what the library service entailed but they were well aware of the drawbacks. Customers were often rude, serving them with books fraught with difficulty, and the rules and regulations complex. The closed access system was a barrier that created frustration and hostility. As one mother wrote to Crestadoro in withdrawing her son: 'hours long and the salary is small'.[532] All the contemporary accounts and histories of the Free Libraries refer to these difficulties.

The first mention of boys being employed in Manchester Free Libraries is in the Minutes of 6 November 1851: two are to be appointed at not more than 10/- per week. Thenceforth the boys, often unnamed in the first years, come and go at a rapid rate in the Minutes.

Once the crowds started flocking to Campfield and then to the branches as they opened, there was an ever increasing demand for assistants. The first fully named boy was Edward Lings, plus a W.H. Gaskell and a J. Chadfield, helping Mr. Looney 'to get & return books' on a temporary basis. The Committee decided the posts should be permanent, and on 19 November placed an advertisement in the *Manchester Guardian*. Twenty applications were received, and J. Chadfield was appointed at 7/- per week. By Crestadoro's time there was hardly any response to such advertisements and it had become near impossible to recruit and retain suitable boys.

The turnover was so great across the years it is difficult to keep track of the individuals, apart from the ones that do occur repeatedly either as the high flyers or as troublemakers. Names of others can be tracked through requests for salary increases or through moves to different departments. As the branches develop there are more lists of named individuals attached to different departments; this does not happen in the early years.

In October 1854, Edwards reported the desperate situation of being short staffed; the situation was saved only by staff sacrificing their fortnightly half holiday. Smiles and then Crestadoro struggled increasingly with the problem of rapid turnover.

## Long Stayers

The boys who appreciated the library service do over time move into more responsible positions as senior assistants, and some even to eventual promotion to the Librarian posts in Manchester or elsewhere. Henry Allpass, Axon, Geoffrey Boughey, Frank Brindley, B. Chadwick, W. R. Credland, Lawrence Dillon, Edwards Lings, Joseph Radford, Charles Sutton, all started off as boy assistants.

The pattern emerges of the long stayers moving up the ladder. On 8 January 1858, Edward Lings was promoted and Joseph Radford filled the vacancy with an increase in salary from 9/- to 11/- per week. Within two years Edward Lings left to become Librarian at Birmingham. Joseph Radford filled the vacancy at the Lending Library at 18/- and Benjamin Chadwick filled his place in the Reference Library with an increase to 12/-.

(Bellhouse commented sneeringly to Smiles that Lings made some fabulous and incorrect claims in his Birmingham reports: ‘However, there is nothing I suppose like blowing one's own trumpet when ambition and self-esteem are prominent in one’s nature.’ Lings did not prosper in Birmingham and was dismissed from another post in Leicester in 1888. The great John Mullins, of rival stature to Crestadoro, became Chief Librarian at Birmingham.)

## Bad Behaviour

The Minutes are full of instances of badly behaved boy assistants: their rudeness, inattentiveness, lying to readers, bullying, drunkeness and violence. The complaints from readers, the descriptions of incidents from the branch librarians make vivid reading. Library literature shows this to be endemic.

Being polite to all customers did not come naturally to the boys, especially when many would have been working people of similar background, and the desperation of readers for particular books was, to some, a cause for mirth. The Letter Books show the branch librarians as defensive of their staff and ready to explain complaints from officials or readers. Some cope better than others with the boys, but the tone of relief when girls are eventually employed is palpable.

The boys, with rare exceptions, would have known little of the value or importance of the new institutions; such boys might have been employed in shops or warehouses and books were just another commodity to most of them. The librarians needed physically active boys and perhaps had not considered the problems that uneducated youths might bring.

Edwards had to deal with some very intractable cases, including two assistants, Gaskell and Brunskill, who as Munford describes: ‘reacted to their long hours and arduous duties by seeking the time-honoured “shortest way out of Manchester”. After reporting for duty in a state of intoxication they had to be dismissed.’[533]

Recruitment was crude. Dyall commented to Smiles on John Hudson who had applied for a post on 27 August 1860: ‘I like his face and if you have no decided preference for any other candidate I think he would answer our purpose, as he has been used to hard work, of which there is plenty here.’

Crestadoro tried to control the situation by a formal process for reporting staffing problems, initially to himself rather than to the Committee. The Letter Books are full of examples where Crestadoro has to intervene.

One such appeal came from Mills, the Rochdale Road Branch Librarian, to Crestadoro:

> I beg to report that W.H. Smith the Second Assistant at this Branch has several times

> boxed the ears of Mr Hand the senior assistant. A few weeks ago I sanctioned him if he did so again I should have to report him. If you would please to speak to him and stop his half day holiday for a week or two it would have a good affect.

Amazingly, W.H. Smith remained at the Rochdale Road Branch, causing trouble some months later, as Mills wrote to Crestadoro on 3 November 1871:

> I am very sorry to have to complain of my second Assistant Smith's incivility and stupidness. If I speak to him he goes about muttering to himself with his hands in his pockets saying that he's put upon. I told him last night that I should have to inform you of his conduct. He replied saying 'I can also tell the Dr a thing or two'. Since Miss Braigh came, I can do no good with him. My Senior Assistant complains every day about him. When I am out he will do nothing that he's told to do. This morning he was in a temper and smashed a leg of one of the Library forms. I will send him down to Campfield tomorrow for the papers, you would greatly oblige me by speaking to him, Your Obd Servant, Att Mills

It is a mystery why Smith was not dismissed immediately: perhaps there was more compassion then, or desperation because of the increasing difficulty in recruitment. Or perhaps there was fear of retaliation: Manchester streets after dark were not safe places. (My father as a teacher in Ancoats in the 1930s learnt to walk close to the wall so missiles could not be thrown down from roofs opposite, and he was popular!)

The boys were given a chance to redeem their behavior but ultimately misconduct could not be tolerated.

## After Dismissal

The Committee had the power to exact punishment even when a boy had been dismissed.

One boy who caused problems at the Chorlton Branch, George Battersby, had left, but Thomas Baker inspecting the assistants' room after a fire (a common problem of the woodwork below the hearthstone overheating), was furious to find two obscene words scrawled on the wall. Naturally the assistants blamed George Battersby, rightly or wrongly. Baker immediately had his borrower's card suspended and banned him from the Newsroom (Minutes 29 May 1867).

The notorious Thomas O'Malley, was still causing trouble, judging by the letter Mills at the Rochdale Road Branch sent to Crestadoro a month earlier (Letter 69/115):

> On Thursday he presented the card and wanted to borrow two other books. We challenged him with having two books out on it already which he acknowledged, so I stopped the cards. He afterwards asked the boy Tonge, for four blank vouchers which he said he would fill up and 'Lick us b--- yet." Also he said he 'had nine books out on one card and he did not care a d--- who knew it.' Will you please say how I must act if he brings in the vouchers filled up?

In March 1869, he was summoned to appear before the Committee for 'gross misconduct' at the Rochdale Branch. His explanations were not deemed satisfactory and he was banned as a reader.

## Exploitation

On 8 December 1860, Smiles wrote at length to Dyall about being harangued by Mrs. Hill, mother of one of Dyall's assistants at Hulme. Smiles was upset at having to deal with this: 'I have had an

interview with Mrs. Hill which I heartily wish I could have been spared.' Both Smiles and Dyall are worried as Mrs. Hill has 'taken advice' and was threatening to go to the Council: 'Mrs. Hill is a clever, very voluble, and I fear vindictive woman.' Mrs. Hill has cause for complaint for her son, whom Dyall describes as a: 'pert boy, strongly inclined to insubordination', has been made to be a 'menial drudge' according to his mother. He has had to wheel the perambulator about, light house fires, carry ladies' dresses 'to distant places' as well as other degrading duties.

Smiles and Dyall closed ranks to avoid this disaster; Smiles directed Dyall to drop the non library duties, to keep everything 'smooth and quiet' and to persuade John Hill to leave. Dismissing him would be risky as there might be an appeal.

There is much on the misbehaviour of the boys in the Letters and Minutes but very little on their exploitation. The fear of the Committee's censure drove Smiles to this defensive behaviour but clearly he did not like a woman like Mrs. Hill who refused to be intimidated.

Smiles devoted himself to the cause of education and facilities for boys in the Libraries, and perhaps he regarded their mischief too lightly. He wrote nostalgically to Crestadoro from the safety of London: 'And kind regards pray to all the youngsters - among whom you have poets, philosophers and I was going to say tumblers?'.[534]

Generally Crestadoro investigated complaints thoroughly and gave objective decisions. There is nothing in the Letter Books in his time to suggest such exploitation of assistants. One case, however, shows harsh and unreasonable treatment.

## William Wild

William Wild was a senior assistant at the Rochdale Road Branch. Thomas O'Malley had bullied and mocked him and, as Mills reported on 11 July 1866: 'When William threatened to report him, told him to do so, and get him the "Sack" and then he (William) would see what he would get when he left the library at night.'

This is all the more horrible as Wild was one armed. Nor did this save him from rebuke by Sutton, as emerges in a letter from Mr. Mills to Crestadoro on 5 April 1870:'His answer was that he did not refuse to carry the periodicals but Beach wanted him to take 4 volumes of additions so he said that if Beach would not take them he could not, the parcel being so large and heavy for him to carry he only having one arm (his left).'

Poor Wild also inadvertently took a holiday without proper authorisation and his letter to Crestadoro shows a heartbreaking panic: 'I can only say that I am extremely sorry for having disobeyed you and that had I seen you before going and you had withheld your permission I would assuredly not have gone. Begging you will accept my most humble apologies I am sir Your contrite servant William Wild.'

It was still resolved in the Minutes of 27 July 1870 that the Chair would see Wild and rebuke him for taking absence in the afternoon of 10 July 'contrary to the arrangements made for taking his holiday'. It is not surprising that Wild looked elsewhere for employment and resigned shortly afterwards.

## Readers' Complaints

It was unwise of the assistants to antagonise readers who were likely to make complaints. An E. J. Whitelaw was treated so rudely (perhaps there was something salacious about the Photographic Journal he requested) that he detailed the incident to Crestadoro on 1 August 1869:

> Last night I went to the reference Library on purpose to see the Photographic Journal… He then told me that 'He would take none of my impudence' and that I should not have the book until I put the catalogue back and if I did not look sharp about it I would be turned out of the room. I asked him his name which he rather reluctantly gave – it was John Pickering. I shall feel greatly obliged if you will inquire into it as this is not the first annoyance of a similar kind that I have been subjected to when I have applied for a book.

Well to do borrowers were in the habit of sending their servants to pick up their books. This must have been an added irritant to the assistants as there are several instances of related complaints. Servants as a class were rather despised by other occupational groups. One such example is the letter sent to Crestadoro in February 1876 (Letter 48/73):

> I regret extremely that I have occasion to complain of the negligence + want of attention on the part of your boys in the lending department. I sent this evening my boy for a book & he reports that although he presented several on a list (not clear) the youth to whom he handed them declined to go & look for any of the books. It is annoying that the benefits so liberally provided should be rendered so difficult of access thro' the insolence of mere lads. Therefore I take this step of appealing to you knowing that this abuse of authority cannot but meet with your instant suppression.

The librarian involved defended his assistants to Crestadoro (Letter 48/75): 'In reply to the complaint made in Mr R. G. Meutha's letter, I beg to say that none of my assistants "declined to go and look for any of the books"'.

Generally the branch librarians did support their staff, whether out of sympathy or to defend themselves as managers is not clear. There are several instances where readers would only accept a decision from Crestadoro. This suggests he won a great deal of trust for fair and thorough treatment.

## Resignations

The number of resignations, the desperate note of some of the requests for salary increases, support the view of a demotivated staff. Families sometimes forced boys to leave for a better paid position. Those without families were desperate: one boy begged for a salary increase as his father had left for work in Sheffield, his mother was dead and his wage of 5/- would not cover board and lodgings.[535]

Even the Senior Assistants were not always satisfied. Given the low salaries, long hours and pressure from families to bring in more money it is not surprising boys regularly left, or that they amused themselves by teasing customers and bullying colleagues. In defence of the boys they were also subjected to abuse from readers, drunkards and from the various perverts and eccentrics who haunted the libraries. Threats and violence were not uncommon and the streets outside were dangerous.

It is sad to read desperate letters of application from those who saw working in the Free Libraries as a refuge for the bookish. It is difficult to imagine W. Blake Atkinson (late Curate of St Martins) who wrote this plea to Crestadoro, coping with front line library services: 'Being yourself a man of letters, you will, at least, I am sure pardon the liberty of this application from a young man who made some efforts in the field of literature and has lately been subjected to most heavy and … misfortune.'

The Free Libraries were competing with the many warehouses of Manchester for physically active,

bright and reliable boys, and the conditions the Free Libraries offered were much less attractive.

Staff not working their full notice added to the problems, leaving no time for recruitment and training of replacements. The Committee were severe over such breaches. There is one letter from Crestadoro to a Mr. Bentley in May 1873 where he seems to be protecting one ex employee from legal action. Crestadoro also refers to honour and reputation, his view of how an Englishman should behave. Presumably Mr.Bentley is the new employer:

> B.C. Beard has left his employment here before the expiration of his notice. This is rather dishonourable conduct and I should have preferred him to have left his old situation unspotted. I deem it my duty to inform you of it; and to say that if I were to report the circumstances to the Committee, the result would certainly be an action against him for breach of conduct.

## Crestadoro's Staffing Crisis

Edwards and Smiles had put up with the problems of the boy assistants, but as the library network grew the situation reached breaking point.

Crestadoro, as he did over the fairs, suddenly poured out a torrent of exasperation, in effect challenging the Committee to confront the crisis instead of just endlessly trying to juggle with it. By an apparently unsolicited report, Crestadoro inspired the Committee to the resolution that is now forever associated with Manchester Public Libraries, the very first employment of female assistants.

Crestadoro was the first to systematically analyse the problems of the boy assistants in the Free Libraries, and unusually he looked at this from the boys' perspective as well as his own. In presenting his view to the Committee he was also careful to include the telling statistics he had gathered – Crestadoro had prepared the ground well.

The Minutes for 28 June 1871 record the historic event and the full text of Crestadoro's remarkable and shocking report:

> Mr Crestadoro begs to report that John Potter, one of the Assistants at Hulme, left without notice, this being the seventh time that assistants have left without notice within the last 12 months. The total number of assistants who have quitted without notice during the same period amounts to 32. In the Campfield Lending Department alone of the present staff of assistants only one has remained with Mr Radford more than one month, and since June 1870 he has had 15 different assistants. In some cases they stay just long enough to learn their work and leave when they begin to be useful - as they meet with better situations.
>
> These frequent changes affect most seriously the service of the Libraries. The Branch librarians have continually to fill - and to do themselves the work of new hands, are necessarily prevented from paying due attention to other responsible duties, and the public manifest impatience and annoyance at being attended to by a succession of strange assistants who are not acquainted with the work and consequently slow in performing their duties. On the evening of the 5th inst at 8.20 pm at the Hulme Library Mr Crestadoro counted 55 borrowers waiting at the counter for books, the staff being actually short of two assistants who had left. It is most necessary to have assistants who are active, intelligent and patient, and who are old enough to exercise discretion but this class of youths is now difficult to obtain. During the last 3 weeks 7 advertisements have been inserted in the Guardian & 6 in the Examiner to supply a vacancy at Campfield but no

applicants have replied to them.

Mr Crestadoro begs to add that in order to secure and retain the services of good assistants and to obviate the frequent changes so injurious to the satisfactory working of the Free Libraries it is necessary to make the engagement more attractive. Youths dislike situations as assistants as there is no time left for them to attend schools or classes in the evenings, and they cannot have the Saturday half holiday : some who engage grow discontented after a time and state that they can obtain situations in offices and warehouses where they are able to earn as much and sometimes more for shorter hours of duty, & also that in the Library service they see nothing worth staying for as a permanency to look forward to. Many have complained that their health has suffered from the close confinement & long hours & some have left or requested to be transferred to the Reference Library on that account.

In conclusion, Mr Crestadoro begs leave to suggest the propriety of the early attention of the Committee being drawn both to the subject of wages and to the hours of attendance & also to the necessity of providing a remedy against assistants leaving without giving due notice. Toward the attainment of the last object he would suggest that a month's wages be always retained in arrear from the assistants as a security for the fulfillment of their engagement. Mr Crestadoro begs also to report that the present staff of the Lending Library are not in full attendance in the evening, the time when they are most required, owing to one assistant being absent each afternoon for his holiday; that an additional assistant is greatly needed in each library, so that a full staff of five may be always present and each attendant have a holiday every 5 days without interfering with the efficiency of the service.

It speaks volumes on how highly Crestadoro's opinion was regarded that his report was thoroughly considered at the 23 July meeting, and as a result radical resolutions made. A half holiday was granted for each week, Branch Sub Committees were given authority to increase salaries, and most startling of all Thomas Baker stated: 'That it is the opinion of this Committee that female labour may with advantage be employed in the Branch Lending Libraries.'

Thus Thomas Baker is credited as the instigator of this policy but I find it hard to believe that he and Crestadoro would not have discussed both Crestadoro's paper and the options given beforehand. It is inconceivable that Crestadoro would have delivered such a controversial report without first involving the Chair. The paper and proposals were a good way of making an impact on the Committee before raising the drastic solution of employing women, and I suspect this was an agreed strategy between Baker and Crestadoro.

The speed with which the changes for half holidays and pay remit, as well as the employment of women were processed, suggests that Baker and Crestadoro planned the whole matter well in advance. Given Crestadoro's support for women's education and opportunities, it was possibly he, not Baker, who first thought of this solution.

## Mrs. Dyall

As well as Baker and Crestadoro, there is another candidate for being the first to suggest a woman assistant in the Free Libraries, unrecognised by historians.

On 17 August 1860, Charles Dyall complained again of the inefficiency of his Senior Assistant, John Moffin, who was on a fortnight's notice. This was a standard complaint but what followed

must have considerably startled the Committee.

Dyall proposed that his wife should be appointed as an assistant in his place at the same wages of 8/- per week. He guaranteed that if she were appointed the: 'duties would be more efficiently performed than with the present assistant.'

The Committee did not dismiss this proposal immediately but 'reserved for further consideration'. The Minutes for 14 September 1860 record that the Hulme Sub Committee did not accept the idea of Mrs. Dyall, on the predictable grounds that she would not be able to combine domestic responsibilities with working as an assistant:

> Resolved: That the Sub Committee are of opinion that Mrs Dyall would not be able to meet satisfactorily the claims upon her time and attention of her family and household affairs on the one hand and of the Library Service on the other; and that the Librarian be accordingly instructed to take necessary steps for procuring another assistant in place of John Moffin.

A John Hill was engaged instead, and perhaps that is the reason why Dyall treated him so badly as described above. So the door was firmly closed on this first female. Revolutionary as the proposal may seem it should be remembered that both husband and wife lived on the premises, and I think there are examples from the subscription libraries of wives or female relations being involved though not salaried.

## The First Appointments

The Committee wasted no time once the decision was taken in August 1871 to employ females. The advertisement for a 'respectable, intelligent young woman as assistant in the Free Libraries' was placed in the *Manchester Guardian* on 5 September 1871. The Committee had not anticipated the huge response or that it would be: 'by so superior a class of applicants' as Thomas Baker described them.[536] Details were taken for twenty applicants and a waiting list created for future vacancies. According to Thomas Baker eight years later: 'The Committee have never had occasion to repeat their advertisement.'

Most of the original female assistants were staying firmly in their posts and there were still others on the waiting lists eager to fill any vacancies, others coming in to work part time in the evenings whilst they waited for a full post. As well as this the Letter Books show a continual stream of enquiries from women or their sponsors for possible employment.

Educated women trying to earn a living had few openings: teacher, governess, companion, translator, author, journalist or reviewer were about all, and most would only have entry to the first three categories. Some were clerks: in Lancashire especially, the Post Office employed women from 1870, insurance and railway companies followed but it was not until the late 1890s that office work generally opened up to women. This move by Manchester Free Libraries was a godsend and the response was a flood of eager applicants, Baker's 'host of young women'.

The emphasis in the advertisement is on 'young': assistants needed to be active, to accept low pay and to do what they were told. They also needed to be single; Manchester Council may have been radical in employing females but not radical enough to employ them when married.

## The First Young Women

It is exciting to handle what must be the very first application from a woman for a post in a Free Library. The letter is dated 4 September 1871 and is from a Sophia Dawson living in Southport. Her

background was impeccable, though her mention of a failed application for a Blackpool library strikes a dubious note. As her name never appears again in the Minutes, it does not look as if she was appointed:

> In reply to an advertisement for a young woman as assistant at the Free Library, Campfield, I beg to say that I am open to an engagement of that kind. I have had long experience amongst Books having been for ten years in a Booksellers & Stationers Shop, kept by a relative who has now retired from business. I should have been in charge of Mr W Slater's Library in Blackpool if my application had reached in time.

Unlike the boy assistants, the young women from middle class backgrounds often had influential backers. In this first recruitment period, backers put forward their candidates either to the Chair or to Crestadoro. From then on there are regular letters to Crestadoro, soliciting employment for female relations or friends.

J. Easterwood successfully recommended his candidate in an informal note to Thomas Baker on 6 September 1871: 'I have great pleasure in recommending the bearer Miss Susan Rhodes for the situation advertised by the Free Libraries Committee. Having known her upwards of nine years & fully believing she will well suit your requirements'.

From this first recruitment (which strangely also drew in some male applicants according to the Letter Books, perhaps they thought 'woman' was a misprint), the Minutes of 27 September 1871 record that four women were appointed: Miss Annie Beswick for Campfield Lending Library, Miss Ellen Sperring at Hulme, and two girls, Miss Annie Brelsford and Miss Susan Rhodes at Chorlton.

Crestadoro informed Susan Rhodes on 7 September 1871 that she had been appointed as assistant at Rusholme Road Branch, requesting: 'her to meet him at that place at 9 o'clock next Monday morning when he will introduce her to the Librarian with a view to her commencing her duties.' This is unusual courtesy: Crestadoro from the start looked after the girls. Susan Rhodes was still in the library service when Crestadoro died. In a letter dated 22 June 1878 asking for a salary increase, she proudly proclaimed the fact that she was the first female assistant in the Manchester. Although perhaps she did not know she was also the first ever female assistant in the Free Libraries:

> I have been in your service nearly seven years having been the first female assistant that was engaged. I began with 6/- a week wages as assistant at the Rusholme Road Branch and am now receiving 16/- a week as senior female assistant in the Reference Library where I have been during the last six years.

Susan Rhodes reached the maximum salary level allowed for female assistants: she was given an increase to 18/- in June 1879 at the age of 28 years.

Only short trials were needed. The Minutes for the 11 October 1871 show Miss Brelsford at the Rochdale Road Branch and a Miss Haywood at Ancoats were awarded an increase from 6/- to 8/- per week. Soon the names of girls appear in increasing numbers in the Minutes and Letter Books. In 1872 and 1873 there were in addition to these, Miss Clara Glyn and Miss Jane Towns at Cheetham, Miss Jessie or Jane Maudsley and an Emily Casserly at Chorlton, Miss Mary Royds at Campfield Reference, another girl at Ancoats, a Miss Emily Twitty at Hulme. In 1874, Elizabeth Twitty joined her sister Emily at Hulme, a Susan Cridge and her brother Thomas were listed along with Susan Rhodes at the Reference Library, and so it continued.

Females became so established that the details of new entrants are not always given; it is only through increases or other matters in the Minutes or Letter Books that the names emerge. Women

assistants like the men, were soon appealing to the Manchester Library Committee for salary increases. This is an annual feature in the Letter Books, generally falling in the July to August period. For example, Miss Foster writes from the Rochdale Branch on 11 August 1875 asking for her wages to be increased, as she has plenty of work: 'and hoping I shall give no offence by doing so'.

## Male Staff

Crestadoro, as might be expected, went out of his way to welcome the young women, moved them to more suitable positions if they had problems, and was always appreciative of their intelligence, headhunting them for his precious cataloguing work.

Most of the branch librarians were happy with their new assistants and relieved at staff now generally staying in their posts.

Thomas Baker commented in his paper to the LA conference that the branch librarians would have preferred initially to keep with boy assistants but followed out the Committee's wishes and were soon won over by the young women. Baker added: 'and now, I believe, there is not one of them who is not in favour of the change.'

It may be an injustice but it is curious that Mr. Mitchell decided to resign as soon as a woman assistant entered his branch. On 11 October 1871, Mitchell from the Ancoats Branch wrote to Crestadoro to inform him the catalogue slips are complete: 'And to intimate to you that the female assistant entered on her duties Monday morning last.' On 11 October 1871, his resignation letter was with the Committee.

Some of the boy assistants plagued the women and in one case the harassment forced a girl to resign. There must have been tensions, for the girls generally came from better educated backgrounds.

## Crestadoro's Report on Female Assistants

Crestadoro was asked to submit a report on progress of the female assistants. His report was read at the Committee meeting on 20 December 1871.

Crestadoro gave his usual thorough account, listing both the advantages and disadvantages. His report needs to be looked at as a whole; selecting parts distorts the overall message. Crestadoro honestly outlined where the girls were weak and what needed to be done to support them. It is clear he is assumed their employment would continue and was taking practical measures to help them, and in the years that followed, that is what he did. The report, like the one on the boy assistants, also illustrates that Crestadoro actually talked to his staff, learnt what really bothered them and looked at moving particular individuals to better situations.

Unfortunately, his opening statement in praise of the females is lost under the long analysis of difficulties and suggested adjustments that followed. It was typical of Crestadoro to detail the problems and then to think of solutions. But the Committee only heard the negative side:

> Mr Crestadoro begs to report that there are now in the Free Libraries nine women assistants, two at each Branch and one in the Lending Department at Campfield.
>
> As compared to the male assistants their efficiency is found, after two months experience, to present the following aspects.
>
> They are very willing and industrious and on the whole they bestow more thought and

attention to the work, and do not require so much looking after as the boys.

On the other hand – 1st They cannot attend to the Borrowers and Readers as promptly and expeditiously as the boys and candidly admit they are not able to do so. The effect of this is most felt during the busy times in the evening when Borrowers and Readers in great numbers are kept waiting longer than they would be with an equal number of boys. This disadvantage is much aggravated when one of the male assistants is taking in his turn his half-holiday and possibly another happens to be absent from illness.

2ndly They do not enter books as accurately and quickly as the boys.

3rdly They are not so useful – if at all adapted – in getting in outstanding books which are due in great number and which can only be recovered by being sent after at all times and in all weather.

4thly They have no control over the unruly lads who frequent the newsrooms in the evening and cannot keep the lobby and porch door of loungers and mischievous young men.

5thly They are unwilling to use the ladders and quite object to do so where the shelves are very high as at Campfield, Hulme and Rochdale Rd Branches.

6thly They also object to take their turn in attending to the heating apparatus which they look upon as menial work.

7thly They do not appear to have the same power of endurance that the boys have and on busy nights show signs of fatigue at a time when their services and activity are most required.

There are sundry minor details of contract, as for instance, dusting the books and shelves, lighting the gas, fixing the newspapers on the stands, going errands either to Campfield or elsewhere etc these things, though they do not object to do them, yet they cannot do so aptly and quickly as the youths.

In conclusion Mr Crestadoro begs leave to submit that in order to maintain the necessary efficiency in the working of the Free Libraries it is highly desirable, if not indispensable, that together with any number of women assistants the staff at each Lending Library should include at least two boys in addition to the Branch Librarian to do the work that cannot be obtained from females, and that some arrangements should be adopted to remove the difficulty as to the use of high ladders by women assistants.

Mr Crestadoro, begs further to report that Miss Beswick assistant at Campfield has given notice to leave, stating as a reason that the ladders are too high for her to use; otherwise she is well- behaved, industrious and very intelligent. He also begs to report that Miss Rhodes, one of the girls at Rusholme Road, appears so hard of hearing as to cause her to make frequent mistakes in attending to the borrowers. Requesting instructions on the subject Mr Crestadoro would beg to suggest that Miss Rhodes might be useful as assistant transcriber in the Reference Department, and Miss Beswick might be transferred to Rusholme Road.

Crestadoro's report strikingly reveals the different attitudes of the women to their posts: they were not menials, they were not there to operate heating systems or to dust. This is a significant and bold stance, instrumental in library assistants eventually improviong their status.

He emphasised the intelligence and commitment of the women in his report. He is clear that high ladders and other such barriers needed to be reconsidered, not the employment of females itself, as the Committee interpreted it.

## Near Disastrous Outcome

Crestadoro was looking at ways of adjusting work for the girls, but the Committee chose to panic at his report, and on 3 January 1872 resolved that there would be no further females until a Sub Committee had further considered the situation. The delay was with a: 'view of observing how the girl assistants work and their suitability for the employment.'

Crestadoro ignored the Committee's resolution and unusually there is no follow up in later Minutes. Crestadoro continued to recruit females as if nothing had happened, rare insubordination. This would suggest quiet intervention from Thomas Baker, who later on repeated Crestadoro's positive points in proclaiming the success of the experiment.

Jane Towns joined the Cheetham Branch and Miss Maudsley joined the Chorlton Branch in May 1872 and on 18 December 1872: 'Mr. Crestadoro reported that he had engaged on trial Miss Mary Rhodes as Assistant in place of Solomon Cunningham whom he has given notice to leave.' Crestadoro is firmly pursuing replacing the boys with the girls (apart from the odd one for rough work) and this must be with Baker's backing.

Crestadoro had good quality staff and he continued to be considerate in how best placed them. Thanks to Crestadoro's suggestions for moves, both Miss Beswick and Miss Susan Rhodes remained in the library service.

Crestadoro's recommendation that a couple of boys should always be employed to cover the rougher duties was implemented, for as Baker reported in 1879 the librarians usually had one youth: 'for any rough work there may be, such as opening and shutting windows, going errands, also in reaching books from the higher shelves, and perhaps in case of disorder in the reading-rooms, though this is of very infrequent occurrence; but for attendance on readers and applicants for books, they prefer the girls.'

Other Free Libraries as they started to take on women assistants, also followed Crestadoro's lead on a youth for the rough work.

## Advancement

In general, the women were a vast improvement on the boys. Library employment was respectable and applicants often came from good backgrounds. The posts were precious and they were not likely to risk losing them through misconduct. Although there were problems to overcome, women generally blossomed in the new freedom of the Manchester libraries.

The first reference I can find to a female assistant becoming a Senior Assistant is in a Letter dated 28 January 1876 from John Dillon on behalf of his brother, the Librarian of the Ancoats Branch, who is at home ill:

> I am requested to state that Miss Carter the Senior Assistant is still absent through sickness and as this is the first day of opening after the quarterly examination of books, he would be much obliged if you will send Allpass to take charge of the Library during his absence.

By the time of Crestadoro's death, there were four women in the Reference Library and twenty-seven in the branches. By 1899 there were five female branch librarians and eighty-two female

assistants.

Credland gave an abstract of Baker's LA speech and added that: 'Some of the ladies originally engaged have since been appointed Branch librarians.'[537] The Minutes show that five early assistants became the first branch librarians of Manchester – Emily Casserly at Ancoats, Emily Tatton at Deansgate, Ruth A. Bentley at Longsight, Jane Finney at Newton Heath and Blanche Twitty at Rochdale Road.

## Wages

As the public library profession developed, women were frequently blamed for keeping wages low. This is often supposed to be the reason Manchester employed women in the first place, but it did not feature in the Committee's considerations. Their prime concern was to attract suitable applicants and to keep them. Although the women started at 8/- on trial on 29 January 1873, it was resolved: 'That another girl assistant be engaged for this Branch (Ancoats) at 10/- per week & that it will be recommended to the General Cttee that the Girl Assistants at the other branches who now receive 8/- be raised to 10/- each.'

There was no need to do this as the women were staying despite the low wages, but there was grateful recognition of their dedication and efficiency. Even so, equal pay was not even considered: the women assistants in Manchester started on the same low salaries as the boys, applied for and received increases but this was capped at a maximum of 18/. Young men went on to earn more.

As the employment of women spread, there was valid concern over the impact on library salaries. By 1879, low pay was clearly seen as a significant benefit in employing women. Professor Seligman implicitly criticised this when he declared at the second LA Conference that: 'he was of opinion that the true criterion was how far a lady librarian could promote the true objects of a library, and not the fact that they could be got for smaller salaries than men.'[538]

## Seeking after posts

The Letter Books have many examples of requests either directly from women or from someone on their behalf. In October 1871, Harry Rawson wrote in favour of another candidate: 'Recommendation for the bearer – Miss Swift for vacancy at Campfield. She has had an excellent education and is in many ways as I believe well adapted for the situation she seeks. I shall feel personally obliged by any… that you may be able to render her.'

In general, letters of recommendation from parents or letters making arrangements for daughters or sisters to take up posts tend to have good addresses. Most of the young women are middle class. A letter dated 27 February 1876 was from Jas Royds about his daughter Emily taking up a post at Cheethams Branch library. This was probably the Rev. Jas Royds who also served as a magistrate. Unfortunately, his daughter proved not to have the stamina or personality to cope with the post.

One letter of recommendation to note is from Julia Gaskell, daughter of Mrs. Gaskell, to Crestadoro. She is writing on 22 February 1877 (Letter 50/59) from the family home on Plymouth Grove:

> My Father thinks I may venture to trouble you about a girl in whom I am much interested. She is most anxious to get the post of librarian at one of the Free Libraries and I believe those appointments are in your gift which must be my excuse for troubling you. Her name is Frances Fidell. She is very well educated, reads and writes very well, and is most thoroughly respectable and high principled. I am quite sure from what I know of her

> character that she would discharge her duties in a most conscientious way.
>
> Her sister I may mention, is at the Cheetham Hill Free Library – and Frances has heard that there is likely to be a post vacant before very long. Perhaps you may have already promised the post to someone as I hear they are in great demand. I hope you will pardon my troubling you in this matter. With many apologies for so doing. In greatest haste. Yours truly Julia B Gaskell.

Given the great respect felt in Manchester towards the Gaskells, this is a sweet letter with no arrogance of tone. Other letters as well indicate that the Gaskells were on good terms with Crestadoro.

A letter to Crestadoro on 18 January 1878 from an Eleanor B. Laird of Belle Vue, Shrewsbury, is fascinating for the view it gives of a middle-aged governess eagerly looking for a change: 'She writes a beautifully clear neat hand & is I should imagine a particularly well qualified woman for a librarian's situation.'

Crestadoro might well have sympathised with someone tired of teaching as he had escaped his own drudgery. But generally it is young women who were employed in the Manchester Libraries.

It was common for both boy and girl assistants at the Free Libraries for their families to be actively involved in getting them employment, in arguing for an increase in salary or raising complaints about their long hours or other issues. The expectation was that young people living at home or even away from home in service would contribute to the family income; their earnings were often critical to survival as a unit. One mother, a Mrs. A. Packman, was determined her daughter would both be considered for a post and if not satisfactory, dismissed. She wrote the application but added that it is in her daughter's handwriting. The anxiety of this widowed parent with nine children to support is palpable. The letter was addressed from 50 Great Dulcie Street and dated 19 January 1878:

> She has been to the Library respecting the place and the Librarian, Mr. Dillon, expressed an opinion that she would suit and recommended an application be made to yourself in the usual way – I beg to bring before you notice that I am a widow with nine children – my husband who was formerly Spade Manager at the Salford County Prison having very recently died and left me in such a position that the success of my present application would be a very great assistance to my family.

## Mixing with Men

Radical as the change was in Manchester Libraries, women were beginning to enter clerical and technical spheres.

There were already hundreds of female telegraph operators in the Post Office, women clerks in the insurance business but in many cases these women worked separately from men, the evolution of the typing pool. An article in the *Western Daily Press* on Monday 9 June 1884 looks at the issue of men and women working together:

> There is no communication between the clerks of different sexes; the hours of work are arranged such a way as to prevent them from meeting when coming or leaving; there is a separate entrance far each, and the women's apartments are in a different part of the building. If such severe restrictions are necessary, the field of female industry will also be much restricted. The experience of the Telegraph Department is that they are unnecessary,

and that morality gains rather than loses when men and women work together.

In the Manchester Free Libraries women worked with the boys and men, and were expected at the start to tackle all the same duties: going up ladders, cleaning out heating apparatus and confronting the gangs who loitered in the doorways. Given the encumbrances of corsets, skirts, and heavy piled up hair, they were handicapped in such tasks as climbing the high ladders, and little wonder they were slower than the boys. Crestadoro took measures to adapt this side of the work for women.

It is interesting to see how the men and women, boys and girls worked together in a hitherto all male environment, all male that is apart from the cleaners. There were cases of harassment and resentment from the boys, and some girls were too frail to cope. But generally the females proved their worth, especially to the branch librarians, and their presence was particularly reassuring to female readers.

Female assistants proved to be good in the potentially risky duties of watching and apprehending book thieves or those suspected of cutting out pages or images. Dillon at Ancoats reported an incident with a female thief in a letter dated 8 March 1876:

> On the sixth inst she again visited the Library and entered the ladies compartment and at nine o clock after the other female visitors had let the assistant (Miss Royds) saw her place the Band of Hope treasury under her shawl and then walk out. She was followed and given into custody and on searching her father's house a copy of the Argosy missed from the room in September last was found in her bedroom.

## Readers' Attitudes to Female Assistants

Readers, especially women, were glad of the presence of female assistants. The number of complaints markedly diminish in the Letter Books; the Libraries had become happier places to visit.

In one case, the complaint seems a rather spiteful singling out of a woman assistant, for, as the Branch Librarian replied, the boys were equally guilty. This incident is in the correspondence from a W.H. Pilling to Crestadoro; his complaint of 27 March 1872 is as follows:

> I am sorry to have to complain of Miss Glyn assistant in the Cheetham Branch library. Ever since this Branch is opened, she has been in the habit of putting away in a private drawer all the choice works of the best authors keeping them in store for her friends, this is very unfair in a Public Library and hope you will investigate the matter.

Crestadoro contacted Credland about this, and he replied on 1 April: 'Miss Glynn admits that she kept books, on one or two rare occasions, for her most intimate friends. The lads have also done the same. I have given them all strict orders as to their future conduct in this matter.'

Sometimes the boys and female assistants got on too well. Where there are complaints from the public it is not so much about rude or insolent behaviour as is the case with the boys but with their habit of talking. Here is one anonymous reader writing to Crestadoro on 24 March 1874:

> I beg to call your attention to the manner in which borrowers from the Cheetham Branch library are treated by the female assistants. I am sure, you will agree with me, when I say it is very unpleasant to stand waiting, at the counter, while all the time they are standing talking and laughing with each other, instead of attending their business, and I assure you, it is the case nine times out of ten. I myself have had to wait from ten to twenty minutes at a time (even when there has been no one there but myself) before I have been taken any notice of whatever.

A badly written complaint from Miles Platting on 16 August 1875 suggests that the male assistant the Cheetham Branch must have been as annoying to the young lady assistants as he was to the readers:

> I Beg to your attention to the Disgraceful & Annoying conduct of that young Man, the Assistant at the Cheetham Branch, enter whenever you choose, night or day, be sure to find eight times out of ten chasing from the forms and table to make company or flirting with the Female Assistants and talking at the top of his voice his sublime ? that sole Amusement and pleasure.

A complaint was directed at Miss Cathcart at the Cheetham Branch for apparently fobbing off a child sent in to change books. This is yet again from Joseph Jones, dated 20 December 1877: 'I have sometimes occasion to send my little girl to Cheetham Library to change my Books but when she goes she seldom brings any number which happens to be on the list I send her with.'

As usual, the branch librarian is defensive in his reply 22 December 1877:

> I beg to inform you that I have looked over Mr Jones' list of books and have found one of the books on the list on the shelf. It appears to have been in since the 3rd December and must have been overlooked by Miss Cathcart who served the child. She denies that she does not show proper attention to children who are sent to the library for books.

## Harassment

Apart from the odd feud, the young women seem to have worked well together, united perhaps in sorting out the boys, the undesirable duties and their branch managers. As Baker described, the branch librarians were in general greatly relieved to have the young women as assistants, for they soon proved themselves bright, reliable and courteous. They brought stability to the libraries; there was no longer rapid staff turnover, the burden of endlessly recruiting and training new staff. Given there are few complaints made of female assistants being insolent, it would seem likely the change from the rude boys was a pleasant one.

But there were problems with some of the boys, who were reluctant to accept the young women. In many instances the women came from better backgrounds, were better educated and generally able to show them up. The young women too, as in any office environment, could have their own feuds.

There is a whole thread in the 1872 letters which ends in what is really a vicious case of harassment. Poor Miss Hannay not only had to contend with the spite of Miss Glynn, but she was victimised by her colleague, J. Locking (perhaps the boy who drowned in the canal in 1878).

Credland's outspoken letter to Crestadoro on 28 January 1873 confirmed that Miss Hannay is not finding her position easy:

> From what Miss Hannay tells me of Locking's recent conduct towards her, and from my own observation of it, I am decidedly of the opinion that the punishment which it was my intention to inflict on him was deserved. From actual experience and therefore without any bias, I can say that Miss Hannay is the best educated, most useful, and most trustworthy of my assistants. Not to show some preference for the work of an assistant possessing these qualities would be impossible – it may be, therefore, that some feeling of jealousy underlies the lad's recent rude behavior.

Sadly, some months later, Miss Hannay gives up the struggle (Letter 41/178):

'I beg to give the usual fortnight's notice to leave the Library service – the notice to date from to-

day, June 14'.

## The Heating Apparatus

The dislike of the women for heavy tasks is a recurring theme in the Letters, and especially where the heating apparatus is involved. Given all the problems with coal, gas, hydrocarbon and oil in the libraries, the objections are understandable. From the very start in her first post at Ancoats, Miss Glynn is having none of it, as her Branch Librarian, Lawrence Dillon, explained to Crestadoro in his letter of 27 November 1871:

> I beg to report that Miss Glynn's Father strongly objects to her attending to the heating apparatus, until you sanction it, as the duties appertaining thereto are very arduous for a female to perform. I beg therefore to inform you that I have taken responsibility for exempting Miss Glynn from those duties, and authorised Henry Allpass, to inform .. until I receive instructions from you.

On 7 October 1872, Boughey wrote to Crestadoro from the Chorlton & Ardwick Branch, with the problem of both his male and female assistants refusing the task:

> I have to inform you that Dean, the Senior Assistant, at this branch, refuses to attend to the heating apparatus altogether, but is willing to take his turn with the other assistants. The female assistants however positively refuse to have anything to do with it. They say it is not fitting work for any respectable female, and that they could not possibly keep themselves clean and decent while attending to it. I shall therefore be glad to have some instructions on the matter.

The firmness and female solidarity in refusing such duties was impressive and the branch librarians were clearly backing off from confrontation. Again, the proposed solution is a sensible one; the charwoman suggested that for extra payment she would be happy to take on the heating apparatus. Boughley detailed this in a letter to Crestadoro on 12 October 1873:

> The Charwoman says she can arrange to attend to the heating apparatus but as she would have to give up some of her other work, she thinks she cannot afford to do it for less than -/6p per day or 3/0 per week.

Supervision of such tasks was a different matter. On 31 October 1872, Sutton, at Campfield Library, applied to be a poll clerk for the day and is quite sure that: 'the young ladies (both of whom will be on duty tomorrow) will be quite competent to superintend the cleaning.'

## George J. Boughey and the Charwoman's Daughter

Despite aggression from the jealous youths, women established themselves as the majority of assistants. The tables were so fully turned that when Boughey suggested to Crestadoro that a boy rather than a female should be employed as the next assistant, he was promptly asked to explain himself. The result is a valuable letter that really shows how the women have taken over, albeit at assistant not senior level. The whole incident also reveals how keen Crestadoro was that women should be employed and supported.

The thread starts with a note from the branch librarian of the Rusholme Road Branch, George J. Boughey, dated 22 June 1874. He has been away on a long period of sick leave and is trying to catch up. He wrote to Crestadoro with much gratitude for the support he received. At the end of his note he adds: 'In reference to Dean's leaving I should like to say that both the interests of the library and in the interests of the female assistants themselves, I think it desirable that the next

assistant should be a boy and not a female, and should therefore be glad if it can be so managed.'

There is a faint note added in different handwriting at the end of this letter to the effect that Dr. Crestadoro should use his discretion as to the person he suggests, whether male or female. The reply has not been preserved but Boughey was clearly upset by it. He tried to explain his position further on 29 June 1874: 'In reference to my suggestion that the fifth assistant should be a male I wish to say not that he should be over the females but that he should be a boy coming in as junior asst. to work under the females, and to do their portions of the library work that the females do not do willingly, and which they cannot do so as much as a boy.'

It is an interesting point whether the young women often coming from middle class families did themselves any favours by being reluctant to take on manual tasks. Certainly their attitude helped in making the assistant role more professional, and did not deter employment of women.

My sympathies are with the person who was proposed by Boughey to fill the vacancy, the idea of a boy having been abandoned. This girl was not middle class but the daughter of the library charwoman. She clearly had support from Boughey judging by his letter of 2 July 1874.

> Dr. Crestadoro
>
> Sir
>
> The Bearer – Jane Cooper – daughter of Mrs Cooper who cleans the library has applied for the situation as assistant here. I have of course known her for some 6 or 7 years and I believe her to be very steady and trustworthy. She lives very near which is an advantage, and, from having been about so much she knows something of the library work. I therefore think that if she meets with your approval, she will be likely to fill the place very well,
>
> I am Sir
> Your Obedient Servant
> George J. Boughey
>
> P.S Enclosed is a specimen of her handwriting

As the salary lists for 15 May 1878 show, this such a perfect compromise was not turned down, and Jane Cooper became an assistant. It would be fascinating to know if she became the Cinderella of the library staff or whether she stood up for herself against the women who did not like to dirty their hands.

## Sickness

There are quite a number of sick notes for the women. This may simply reflect their increased numbers rather than a higher level of illness. But many of the young women were from middle class backgrounds and not used to the long hours, hard work or to mingling with people of all classes. Respiratory diseases were rife; polluted air outside and within the libraries.

As with the boy assistants, if transfers closer to home could help, this was usually arranged. A grateful mother, Mrs. Haywood from 175 Collyhurst Road, wrote on19 June 1872 to give Crestadoro heartfelt thanks:

> I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter and to assure you we are very grateful indeed to you for the consideration you have towards my daughter in proposing to transfer her to the Livesey St Branch. I accept your offer with sincere thanks and think.. to please

> in everything it will also be a great .. to her in being so much nearer her home than the Ancoats branch. I have made Mr Dillon acquainted with the cause of her absence. I presume you have done the same – she has been very ill for days. Will she return to Ancoats and gradually transfer?
>
> Believe me to be with the greatest respect and thankfully Your obedient servant Mrs … Haywood"

It was rare for a staff member, whether male or female, to be dismissed. Judging by Crestadoro's account Emily Royds was clearly unsatisfactory all round. Even so, he was remarkably gentle in writing about this to her father on 8 February 1877 and the dismissal seems more of a suggestion than a definite action:

> The frequent absence of your daughter Emily through illness, and her lateness in arriving at the library in the morning have made much inconvenience to us, and leads me to think that the employment is not suited to her. Nor does her disposition accord with those of her fellow assistants, for I find she cannot get on harmoniously with them. Under these circumstances I hope you may see the desirability of procuring for her some more congenial occupation. I may remind you that she was engaged on trial. The experience we have had of her does assist me in not recommending the Committee to place her on the Permanent staff.

Emily appreciated Crestadoro's kindness: she wrote to him directly five days later, to give in her notice with much regret and hoped one day, in different circumstances, she might resume it: 'if you would kindly permit me'.

## Success of the Experiment

On 12 November 1874, Crestadoro provided this information in response to one of many questions sent by the St Pancras Board: 'the present staff consists of A Chief Librarian, a sub-librarian, seven Branch librarians and 32 Assistants twenty of them being Female at salaries varying from 6/- to £350 a year.'

In a remarkably short time women had filled the posts vacated by the boys.

More evidence of Manchester's commitment to women assistants is in the description of the new building for the Cheetham Branch, where provision is planned as a matter of course for both male and female assistants. This is described in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* for Saturday 29 September 1877: 'Near the front entrance there will be a private staircase leading to the basement. Here there will be committee-room, storerooms for papers and books, rooms for the male and female assistants, lavatories, &z.'

The introduction of women was seen one of the factors in Manchester's triumphant development of libraries.

The salary increase lists, which appear rather irregularly in the Minutes, give a picture not just of how the numbers are changing but of the individuals who remain with the libraries over the years, or are replaced by sisters.

Crestadoro must have been proud of what had been achieved in such a comparatively short period. Several of the names reflect connections with other family members employed at the libraries, or on the Committee, or known in other ways to Baker and Crestadoro. This has become a loyal workforce, identifying with the aims of the libraries.

## Baker's Speech

In September 1879, the second LA Conference was held in Manchester in 'the noble rooms of the New Town Hall'. Thomas Baker was chair of the local committee who organised this and his paper on the employment of young women at Manchester was described in the Preface as: 'an opportune feature in our proceedings.'[539]

Baker emphasised the modern attitude of the Committee in making the bold trial at a time when: 'the subject of woman, her rights, duties, and employment— particularly her exclusion from certain trades and professions—was engaging the attention of thoughtful people.' Baker credited himself for making the groundbreaking proposal of employing women.

In startling contrast to Crestadoro's initial report, he very much played down the boys' grievances, painted a picture of light, pleasant duties and claimed that: 'No dissatisfaction was ever expressed with the work'. According to Baker, had there been more of a mechanism for professional training and promotion Manchester Free Libraries might have kept the boys instead of losing them as they became men and found better-paid posts outside the library service. Baker clearly did not want to air dirty linen in public but he is re-writing history.

As regards the women, Baker's paper owes much of its content and conclusions to Crestadoro, drawing from both his original report and his follow up review on how women fared in the libraries. He includes the need for a youth to cover rough work –an idea initiated and implemented by Crestadoro. But he gave no mention of Crestadoro or his role as a catalyst in the employment of women assistants.

Had Crestadoro lived long enough to attend the second Conference he would have listened to Baker and raised no objection to his exclusion from the account. A modest man, his care was for the success of the Manchester Libraries and for improving opportunities for women rather than for personal glorification.

## Crestadoro's View

Crestadoro, as well as supporting employment of the female assistants, was as considerate towards them as he was to all his staff and readers.

Letters of resignation often make reference to his kindness. Susan Bridges resigned on 26 August 1875 and wrote in her notice: 'to thank you for the kindness I have always experienced at your hands during the times I have been here.'

Crestadoro saw employment of women as critical to running libraries and encouraged others to do so. On 27 November 1878, the Bradford Librarian thanked him for information on female library assistants, adding that they will be appointing two: one for the Lending Department: 'specially for attending to Female borrowers, and one for the Room attached to the Reference Dept, specially set aside for female readers'.

Worcester Free Library sent out a printed sheet of questions to all the Free Libraries. Crestadoro responded with simple and practical advice. His draft replies were scribbled on the back of the sheet, and represent some of the last such advice he gave, as this is dated 30 December 1878.

There is a lengthy question:

> From your experience of a Public Library is there any information which you could place at our disposal either as to what to adopt or what to avoid, in the institution and subsequent arrangements, lighting or heating of the Building, its furniture and arrangement for

efficiency and economy generally – for a growing City (say) 40,000 people?

As a summary of years working in Manchester Free Libraries it is clear from Crestadoro's reply that two points were dear to his heart: 'I would simply say let yr library be lighted directly or entirely from the roof & keep the shelving low in order that you may employ female assistants.'

## Charwomen and Porters

As might be expected there is little on charwomen and porters in the Letter Books, charwomen in particular tend to be invisible. As far as I know library history studies have never looked at their role, but they should not be ignored as their degree of commitment determined the appearance and comfort of the libraries both for other staff and readers.

Fragments in the Letter Books suggest stories whose content is mainly lost. The charwomen are not even listed in the usual reports of staff numbers but they were important to the working of the libraries. Crestadoro had a reputation as a courteous and genial employer; I imagine that he extended this to the charwomen and porters and listened to their needs.

The porter had a hard task, helping to keep order: the Committee wisely appointed an ex Police Sergeant, Charles Newsome Thwaite, as the first porter at Campfield. As well as their security and caretaker duties, the porters chased up overdue books (as did the library assistants), dealt with all the parcels and deliveries and were called upon to sort out the dreaded heating apparatus. It does not sound as if there were porters at each branch, as the porter from Campfield is sent out to deal with the boys making trouble for Miss Glyn. The only voice for a porter is in a beautifully written letter in 1869, when he requested a warm overcoat as he has to be outside so much:

> Gentlemen
>
> I beg respectfully to ask for the grant of an Overcoat in addition to the kit ? of Livery which I receive from you. I have to go errands in all weathers and if you could kindly accede to my request I should be enabled to protect myself from the rain and cold and preserve my clothes,
>
> Edward Mason

The reply has two samples of dark blue, heavy duty cloth attached with a note that this is 'Blue Pilot' for the Hall Porter from 39 Clifford St, Oxford St and that the higher price will give the best service, £2-10, -15 sh. It is reassuring that such care was taken to keep Edward Mason warm and it does feel peculiar touching the scraps of 'Blue Pilot' from so long ago; the woad dyed wool is still clearly good quality. Pilot cloth probably gave rise to the term of pea jackets as worn in the UK and US navies; it was a heavy, coarse twilled blue cloth with nap on one side, the best to keep out Atlantic as well as Manchester weather.

The charwomen are interesting: one was a terror and brought in her friends to drink, but the rest seem settled members of staff, ready, as was related above, to take on extra duties and earn more money. Like the assistants they appealed to the Committee for increases in their wages. One of the letters is in the most beautiful handwriting, the best in the Letter Books, which makes you wonder who was she and, if well educated, why she could not get a better job. But cleaning traditionally fits in with women who are raising their families, so perhaps the answer is simple.

As with any position in the Free Libraries references were essential; a letter written in October 1871 is a rare example of one for a charwoman: '78 York St Hulme I have known Mrs Street about twelve months She has worked for… I believe her to be strictly honest. Mary Baker.'

The charwomen were essential for keeping the libraries up to standard; the mud, dirt and dust, let alone the grease from the lights and heating, would have meant a constant battle with buckets, scrubbing brushes, soda and hard soap.

There are requests for more hours both from the charwomen and the branch librarians. Bellhouse wrote to Crestadoro on 29 October 1864 from the Rochdale Road Branch, outlining the importance of the charwoman's work:

> I beg to submit to your consideration the propriety of having a Charwoman daily at our Branch to sweep the room and dust all the furniture etc therein and thus adding comfort, health and Cleanliness to the Institution. At present we have a woman in a few hours on Friday mornings subj. to whom we pay 1/s per week and I am in a position to state that she would attend Every Morning and do all which I thought Necessary for 3/6 or 4/- per week should the Committee think proper to sanction the same. I need not inform you that under the present arrangement the Junior Assistant is supposed to sweep this large room and do a little dusting previous to opening at half-past Eight o'clock, which were he ever so strong and punctual could only be hurriedly done in so short a time. In addition to this we have winter advancing which will require the fire making and emptying of ashes in connection with the Heating Apparatus of our Branch.

The advent of the female assistants, as we have seen, put paid to this part of the assistant's role, especially as regards the heating apparatus.

The onset of autumn and winter, with the increased wet and mud trampled into the libraries, was a constant challenge for the branch librarians, and Mitchell from Hulme supported Bellhouse, making a similar claim on 5/6 November 1864 for his own charwoman who is engaged for Friday mornings: 'but will do all mornings for 5/- not including 2 days cleaning at the Quarterly Closing for which she will expect 2/6 per day extra.' Both are asked to give further estimates so presumably changes were made.

Anne Cooper from the Chorlton & Ardwick Branch whose daughter Jane was recommended for the post of assistant by the librarian (as described above) was clearly an educated and articulate woman judging by her beautifully-written letter:

> I beg most respectfully to ask for an increase of the amount paid for cleaning this Library. I have done the cleaning for nearly four years and during that time the work has been so much increased by the additional tables etc that for the last two winters I have been compelled to bring a girl with me otherwise it would have been impossible to get the work done in the time.

She then details the size and shape of the rooms, alcoves and passage for the Committee to persuade them of the magnitude of her task. The girl referred to is presumably her daughter Jane.

The charwomen were generally regarded as part of the library team judging by how the assistants call upon them to bear witness to certain incidents. For example, William Wild in November 1871, reported a Reader at the Rochdale Branch who came in before opening time and referred to the charwoman trying to stop him:

> This morning (Nov 16) a gentleman passed the Charwoman, who was cleaning the Library steps, before half past eight. Though told by her that the place was not yet open to the Public. When informed by me that the Newsroom was not opened until 08.30, he replied that it was that time and that if it was not opened, it ought to be so.

Hannah Redheath, in the autumn of 1871, broke her leg and could not work for a few weeks: she was concerned to ensure her duties are covered. She sent a Mrs. Peacock with her note, recommending her as she has assisted before.

However, not all charwomen were helpful. As with the aggressive assistants it is surprising to see how long suffering the library employers were, certainly a contrast to the twenty-first century approach. Mills at the Rochdale Branch complained to Crestadoro of the charwoman Mrs Craven, and added rather an astonishing postscript, 8 December 1870:

> I beg to report that the Charwoman at this Branch Mrs Craven has refused to make the library fires for the last week. On Monday morning the 5th I sent for her and asked her name.. and requested her to make the fires, she replied that she would not make the fires without the clips .. or the firewood was left ready for her, and then she went home without making them. I also beg to report that on Wednesday the 30th November closing day for Quarterly Cleaning that she was half drunk all the day and did her work in a very unsatisfactory manner. I went into the Assistants Room and found a large Bottle belonging to her containing Beer which I took away. I left at 7pm having been in the library all day checking the books off, leaving the second Assistant W Smith to lock up after me. He reported next morning that the Charwoman had several other women in the library and they were all drunk. Any of the Assistants can speak as to the truth of the above statements, Your Obd. Servant A H Mills
>
> PS The Senior Assistant W Wild informed me that she has been discharged several times by Mr Bellhouse for the same thing, and that she was once away for twelve months.

Despite all this repeated outrageous behaviour, Mrs Craven lasted another few months until September 1871 when Mills finally dismissed her: ‘Her answer was she would see you.’ It looks as if Mrs Craven still tried a last minute appeal as there is a note written a few days later to Crestadoro, now very difficult to read. But it surely is from the indomitable charwoman – it is signed by a Mrs C..: ‘Very sorry not to come as usual – laid up with Dibrzec [sic]. So long in service would be sorry to leave.’

Crestadoro clearly was not persuaded, and supported her dismissal in September 1871 for later in the month. Mills placed a notice for a charwoman on the Library Door, and in advising Crestadoro of this added: ‘all suitable candidates I will forward to you.’ This is promptly followed by an applicant who is sent to Crestadoro with a reference.

The hard work in one case proved too much, though the charwoman concerned was prepared to carry on until another was appointed, which suggests a good relationship with the Branch Librarian, Credland, and his team. Credland wrote to Crestadoro on 12 June 1872: ‘Mrs… Charwoman informs me that she is afraid she is not strong enough to continue the office and therefore requests me to find a substitute. She will continue to do the work until one is found.’

Touchingly, an official or police officer at the City Police Courts put forward this case for the vacancy to the Cheetham Branch Librarian on 14 June 1872:

> The bearer is a poor and very deserving woman with four children & is in need of work & as you are in want of a woman to clean out the Branch library Cheetham I should take it as a kindness to the poor woman if you would speak to the Doctor for her as I can recommend she would suit you, Yrs Smith

## The Library Committee

From the first start in Manchester, women continued to advance in public libraries until by the late 1960s they were measured as around 70% of the workforce.

The LA did little to address issues of women's employment. Women won through by sheer efficiency and persistence. They encountered overt and veiled hostility, harassment and patronising attitudes as well as appreciation, respect and comradeship. Library journals record many debates over the employment of women and the attitudes of some male correspondents are repellent.

In the light of all this, the tone of Crestadoro's reports and Baker's paper on women workers is both serious and gender neutral. They are concerned only with the efficient running of the Free Libraries and the best staff to do that. Gender is not an issue, apart from having to adapt work as necessary.

In Manchester, the figures alone speak volumes. Credland in his 1899 history lists the staff numbers as 155, from Chief Librarian down to the porters and cleaners. There are eleven branch librarians of whom five are women, ninety-seven assistants of whom eighty-two are women. Most of the branches have porters to cover the heavy work.

However, it is striking that whilst the eleven branches are solidly female, no male assistants at all, the Reference Library has fifteen male assistants and only two female. The lack of females at the Reference Library would not have pleased Crestadoro and perhaps its becoming very much a male preserve accounts for why a woman has never been Chief Librarian there. Freemasonry may also be a factor.

There were no women on the Library Committee, from the beginning Manchester only allowed elected councillors to serve. In 1902, Mrs. Pankhurst made an unsuccessful bid to change this situation as reported in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, Monday 12 May 1902:

> THE FREE LIBRARIES. PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF WOMEN ON THE COMMITTEE. On Thursday next, at the Manchester Trades Council, the following resolution from the Workers' Union will be submitted : 'That, the Manchester and Trades Council deem it advisable take advantage of the Amended Libraries Act (1901) and petition the City Council to appoint a number of women on the Libraries Committee, and the name of Mrs. Pankhurst is submitted as one who should be asked to serve, she being the Trades Unionist representative on the Manchester School Board.

It was not until 1908 that Margaret Ashton became the first woman to be a City Councillor. Amongst other duties she served on the Parks and Libraries Committee.

Was this another female first for Manchester?

[530] Thomas Baker, 'The Employment of young women as assistants in public Free Libraries' in *Transactions and proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of the Library Association*, p.33

[531] Baker, 'The Employment of young women'

[532] MA, In Letter 155/71

[533] Munford, *Edward Edwards*, p.115

[534] MA, In Letter 31/129

[535] MA, In Letter 91/1864

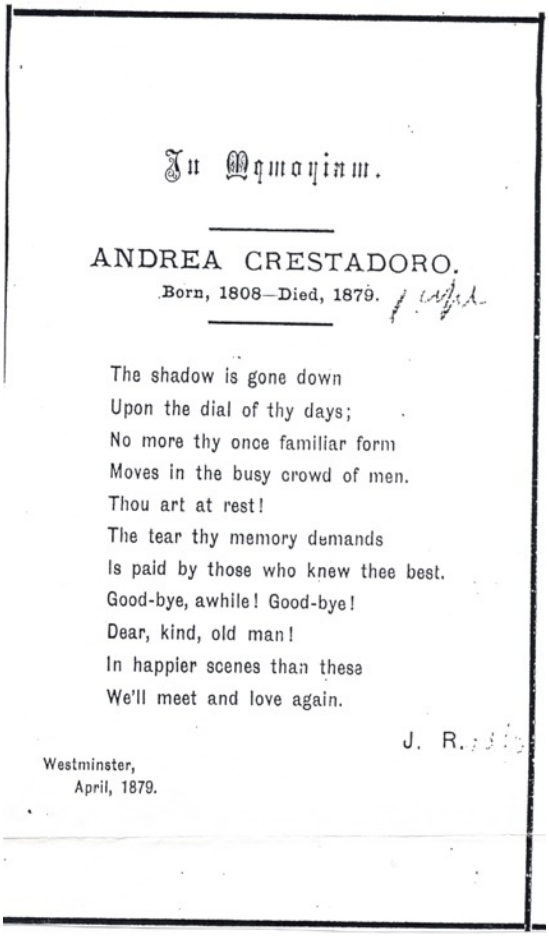
[536] Baker, 'The Employment of young women'

[537] Credland, *The Manchester Public Libraries*, p.156

[538] *Transactions and proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of the Library Association*, p.95

[539] Preface in *Transactions and proceedings of the Conference of Librarians, held in London, October 1877*, p.x

# Chapter Twenty-Two: Dear, Kind, Old Man



In Memoriam.

ANDREA CRESTADORO.

Born, 1808—Died, 1879.

The shadow is gone down
Upon the dial of thy days;
No more thy once familiar form
Moves in the busy crowd of men.
Thou art at rest!
The tear thy memory demands
Is paid by those who knew thee best.
Good-bye, awhile! Good-bye!
Dear, kind, old man!
In happier scenes than these
We'll meet and love again.

J. R.

Westminster,
April, 1879.

Fig.36 In Memoriam Poem

## Joseph Radford

The above poem is held in the Manchester Archives file for Crestadoro. Faint letters follow the 'J.R.' initials: it took me a long time to decipher these as 'Joseph Radford'.

Radford joined the Manchester Free Libraries as a boy assistant in March 1854. He would have been thirteen then, as the 1871 Census lists him as age thirty. He was valued by Smiles. Writing to Axon on 6 February 1864 from the *Railway News* office in London Smiles asked to be remembered to him: 'Kind remembrances to Mr Radford and such other of your co-labourers of the library as join in yr kind remembrance'.

There is a memo from Crestadoro in the Minutes for 26 July 1865, praising Radford and two assistants for catching the newspaper thief who had plagued the libraries, and reporting the conviction. Radford progressed, becoming Senior Branch Librarian at Campfield Lending Library sometime before 1867; a letter dated 28 January 1867 records his request for a salary increase.

His name appears several times in the Letter Books, working closely with Crestadoro at Campfield. One such example is in Radford's letter to Baker in July 1871: 'I beg to report that I have read Mr. Fletcher's last letter respecting the Campfield Lending Library Catalogue and that I have communicated it to Mr. Crestadoro, and that after reading it, both of us were unable to make sense of it. If I could make a report respecting the letter, I would willingly do so, J Radford'

The Minutes of 22 December 1869 record Radford's admirable response to a fire at Campfield: 'that this Committee express their approval of the conduct of Mr Radford in not leaving the building when he had reason to suspect the existence of burning material but in remaining and finding out the cause and thereby preventing a serious fire.'

Radford joined Westminster Free Library on 31 July 1876 as Librarian and Secretary at a salary of £100, raised later to £120 then £140. His duties included keeping accounts and: 'personal management of the issue & receipt of books, periodicals, & '.[540]

Evidently he impressed for he was appointed secretary to the Committee of Organization for the Librarians' Conference in 1877. He also took part in cultural life: on Saturday, 8 June 1878 the *East London Observer* reported that Radford read: 'an exhaustive paper on the advantages of Free Libraries at the Victoria Park Tabernacle on Tuesday evening.'

Yet Radford distrusted London, and his loyalties remained with Crestadoro and the north. He confided in Crestadoro on 18 April 1877: 'I have observed that London libraries appear to have their share of local conceit and prejudice. There is no doubt that London might with advantage copy the example of the leading provincial cities and towns as regards Free Public Libraries.'

He maintained regular contact with Crestadoro. As described, he divulged the confidential business of the Conference of Librarians Committee to him. He always asked for news of Manchester, admitting to Crestadoro in May 1877 that he was feeling rather lost:

> I am sure you must be in a confused state of things. Is there any prospect of obtaining the Old Town Hall? It is a pity the question is not settled…Will you accept my kind regards. I wish to be remembered to Mrs. Crestadoro. I sometimes feel lonely and strange in London. You know it is a large place and it seems larger than it is to one who is almost a stranger to it.

It was only Crestadoro's friends, like Smiles, who sent greetings to Mrs. Crestadoro, indicating that they had been introduced to her or perhaps received as her guests at home.

As both a friend and former colleague, in a respectful relationship to the scholarly Crestadoro, Radford must have felt even more cut adrift by his death. The poem is extremely personal with its expression of fondness for Crestadoro and a longing for better times.

Westminster Free Library seems to have been rather an unhappy environment with petty politics, a Committee in dispute, staff resignations, accidents and death. As Derek Jones described in his history of the library: 'The Commissioners had some unfortunate experiences over the years with the appointments they made for Librarian. Two were to die in office, two were to embezzle funds and the appointment of a fellow Commissioner … to act as Secretary and not as Librarian was a controversial interlude.'[541]

It is odd that two librarians were accused of taking money. Were they framed for the theft?

Sadly, one of those dismissed for embezzlement was Radford. The District Auditor found no entries had been made in the ledger since June 1878, and Radford was suspended in March 1881. The subsequent investigation determined that he owed the Commissioners £163-1-4 for sales of catalogues and fines; this money had apparently gone into his own pocket.

The family details in the 1881 census enable his story to be followed. He is recorded as living with his mother and other relatives in Manchester, married with two children, Ann (four years) and Joseph (one year) both recorded as being born in Westminster. His profession is given as librarian but presumably he was no longer in employment at this stage and had returned to Manchester in despair.

In the 1901 Census he has two more children and is working as a Warehouse Porter. His wife and daughter (Ann, now listed as Amy, age twenty-four) are described as home workers, seamstresses for Shirts and Handkerchiefs. His son Joseph is a 'Mariner Seas', his son William an 'Office Boy Port' and Harold aged nine is still at school. They have Elizabeth Driver as a lodger, recorded as 'Saleswoman, Mantles'. Radford is now sixty and life must have been a hard struggle over the previous twenty years.

The 1911 Census shows a much brighter picture. He is working, aged seventy, as a 'Cataloguer Public Library' employed by the City Council. Amy is at home, single, Harold is an Organ Builder, and there is no lodger and no mention of home working on shirts. Somehow, Radford was rescued by Manchester Free Libraries where his old colleague, Sutton, was Chief. It is good to imagine his return to the haven of books, bibliographies and catalogues. He died in 1914.

## Last Years

Crestadoro was full of projects to the end. He may have been less active in the Libraries, leaving much for the eager Sutton to cover, but he was busy with taxation reform, joint stock companies and his aeronautical inventions. It is unusual to find a suggestion that he has suffered ill health, but on 25 August 1874, Benjamin Chadwick, Branch Librarian at Hulme, wrote to him from holiday at Aberystwyth to request an extension of leave. He added an unusual note of: 'Hoping you are in good health'.

Good wishes for health are not normally found in the Letter Books and so weight can be placed on it, trivial as it looks. There is even more substance in a letter from the theatre manager, Charles Calvert, sent in early 1875, February or March:

> Avon Lodge Alexander Park M/c
>
> Dear Professor
>
> Can you oblige me with the first volume of 'Cannes' restorations of Ancient Rome with illustrations – the Bearer will bring it if you will allow him – or if it would make no difference to you shall prefer the loan of the entire work. Trusting you are in better health these days Believe me Yours sincerely C A Calvert

In the next letter Calvert sought help from Crestadoro in finding illustrations of Rome in the time of Julius Caesar. Calvert had known Crestadoro for years and was obviously is on close terms for he added: 'You are always my refuge in a difficulty', and presumably as a friend was aware of his health problems.

As previously described, Crestadoro regretfully declined the invitation to the American Librarians Conference in 1876.

Crestadoro does on occasion lament not having time for writing, which may indicate health troubles. He refers to lack of time preventing him from producing a second edition of the *Art of Making Catalogues* in a letter dated 2 Sept 1878:

> Gentm. Your correspondent is in error in saying I have written a work on Free Libraries. He is probably thinking of my little work on the 'Art of Making Catalogues' which has for many years been out of print. I cherish the intention of some day finding time to prepare a second edition of it but when that will be I cannot say.

He was contemplating another work on Free Libraries but again lacked time to produce it, according to an undated letter to John Pink at Cambridge in the Crestadoro file at Manchester Archives:

> A manual in the establishment and conduct of Free Libraries containing some further information than that hitherto published is certainly wanted. I believe Mr. Edwards is preparing something towards it. I had collected some materials towards the same object but have had no time to put them in a presentable shape.

From January 1879 onwards the Letter Books show Sutton taking over from Crestadoro. Even before then, Sutton seems to be the main person covering the Campfield disaster and its aftermath, and there are references to Crestadoro's absences in the summer of 1878, which may be for health reasons as well as holidays.

Again, as already mentioned, Axon had picked up on Crestadoro's sense that something was not right with his health in his foreboding that he would not complete his last index

The *Momus* article and caricature portrait of Crestadoro appeared on 20 March 1879. Hopefully, Crestadoro was well enough to enjoy the article that reflected his own view of his life and achievements. Axon described him as suffering from a brief illness, not thought at first to be serious: 'Dr. Crestadoro had been absent from his duties more than a month, but no alarming symptoms manifested themselves until Friday or Saturday last.'[542]

The severe weather, the 1879 winter is one of the coldest on record, cannot have helped.

## Death and Burial

On Monday 7 April 1879 Crestadoro died at his home, 155 Upper Brook Street.

The cause given on the Entry of Death certificate is Albuminism, certified by L. Crompton M.D.

The certificate is signed by I. Richley, who was present at the death and is dated 10 April 1879. In fact, albuminism is not a disease, it is a symptom. Dr. Richard Bright, by employing new methods of observation had identified in the 1830s the relationship of albuminous urine and diseased kidneys, the condition known since then as Bright's Disease, The medical profession being slow to change, albuminism was still being cited as a cause of death.

One newspaper reporting the news of his death speculated before the funeral that Crestadoro might be buried at the new municipal cemetery out in the Elysian fields of Brooklands, Sale, but for whatever reason, perhaps financial, the private Ardwick Cemetery close to his home was preferred. (Crestadoro was also just too early for the Southern Cemetery, which opened later in the year in Wythenshawe).

He was buried on 12 April at Ardwick Cemetery. There are no accounts of his funeral, no list of prominent citizens accompanying him to his grave. Crestadoro was well known in Manchester but he was not formally affiliated to a local political body or active in a church denomination. This, and not having a large family, might well explain what seems to be an undistinguished shuffling off. The official minister for Crestadoro was W.E. Grey who appears regularly in the records for the cemetery: only a Church of England service was allowed in the chapel there. The obituaries are also low-key. Apart from Axon's long contribution in the *Manchester Guardian* on 8 April, there are only a few short mentions in local and national newspapers.

## Ardwick Cemetery

Ardwick Cemetery was opened in 1838 as a private, non-denominational cemetery, a new venture to cope with the burying Manchester's now enormous numbers of dead. Sir Thomas Potter was, of course, involved in the enterprise. Ardwick Cemetery was so successful that restrictions had to be imposed to limit burials in 1893. Health concerns were raised with the prevalence of sore throats amongst patients in the neighbouring Nicholls hospital. It was taken over by the Council and finally closed in 1950.

The cemetery's decayed state was vividly portrayed in the *Manchester Guardian* of 6 December 1957. The pretty park had become a sinister wilderness. The reporter walking round with the caretaker, reminisced that:

> It had been a fashionable cemetery once: Manchester's first two mayors were buried here. So was John Dalton, the scientist and chemist; and if you walked round and could peer through some of the bushes you would find the names of many distinguished people-merchants and aldermen and many people who lived in the great houses of Ardwick Green, 'Quality people,' Mr Cawthra called them.

Manchester is a ruthless city and Ardwick Cemetery, resting place of so many prominent Manchester citizens, has long gone, demolished brutally in 1963/4 to provide playing fields for Nicholls, now turned into a school. My father remembered how his friend, the Nicholls Headmaster Harold Roberts, complained that odd bones turned up to cut the shins of the footballers. He was never happy about it as a playing field.

A plaque was erected on the Devonshire Street side of the field:

> The field was formerly Ardwick Cemetery, where between 1838 and 1950, the remains of over 80,000 people were interred, including John Dalton, Scientist 1766-1855; Sir Thomas Potter, first Mayor of Manchester 1773-1845; Ernest Jones, the Chartist 1819-1869; Bugler Robert Hawthorne, 52nd Light Infantry, who won the Victoria Cross at Delhi in

> 1857, and many other of all walks of life who served God in their day and generation.[543]

The graves were bulldozed but the original records still exist. Crestadoro's entry for burial, 2218, is dated 12 April, Grave Number 3274L, his age is given incorrectly as 70 years, and the cause of death as asthma. He was placed to rest in a numbered grave, unlike the thousands who surrounded him in the unmarked graves. The grave might have been a shared mausoleum. The same number is registered for Frances Brazilier, buried 3 January 1873 at 54 years old.

Ardwick Cemetery was not lost without a fight and attempts were made to capture some of the gravestone inscriptions onto microfilm, but not for Crestadoro.

## Memorials

A short obituary notice was syndicated across local, national and foreign newspapers, repeating the same basic, muddled and misleading information. This is the entry from the *Glasgow Herald*, 8 April 1879, identical to those in several other newspapers:

> DEATH OF PROFESSOR CRESTADORO
>
> Professor Andrew Crestadoro of Turin University, Professor of Philosophy, and chief librarian of Manchester Free Libraries, died yesterday, in his 71st year. He wrote various works on indexing and cataloguing, in which he introduced many valuable improvements, and on taxation. A work of his on the best means of raising the public revenue in his native country brought him the honour of Knight of the Crown of Italy. He also made some suggestions to Cavour which were acted upon in settling the difficulty of the Sovereign Pope residing in the Kingdom of Italy.

A notice was put in *The Times*, perhaps by Radford, Axon or Mrs. Crestadoro, 'deeply lamented' is quite strong for such notices in *The Times*:

> On the 7th inst. at 155 Upper Brook-street, Manchester, ANDREA CRESTADORO, Ph.D. Chief Librarian of the Manchester Free Libraries, in his 71st year, deeply lamented.

Axon's long obituary appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* on April 8; this formed the basis of his later *DNB* entry. Axon did not produce a promised piece on Crestadoro for *The Library Journal*, edited by Melvil Dewey, despite the announcement in the June 1879 issue: 'We are promised a sketch of the late Dr. Christodoro of Manchester by his friend and former associate, Mr. W.E.A. Axon.' It seems appalling that the name could already be wrongly cited.

Axon also included Crestadoro in his *Annals of Manchester*. There is the familiar summary but he oddly gives 1861 instead of 1864 as the date of Crestadoro's appointment. This is the same erroneous date Crestadoro gave in his naturalisation application, concealing whatever he had been up to in this period. Perhaps he kept repeating this, hence Axon's unusual error:

> In 1861 he was appointed chief librarian of the Manchester Free Libraries, and in 1878 he was created by the King of Italy a Cavaliere dell' Ordine de Corona d'ltalia. In 1861 he published a work entitled, Du Pouvoir Temporal et de la Souverainete Pontificale. His aptitude for bibliography was exceptional, and for some years he undertook the compilation of the British Catalogue for Messrs. Sampson, Low, and Co. In 1856 he published a pamphlet on The Art of Making Catalogues. The first volume of the catalogue of the Manchester Reference Library was compiled by him, and is a work which exhibits much industry and ingenuity. He is buried at Ardwick Cemetery.[544]

Crestadoro's death did receive some attention at the meeting to organise the second annual

conference of the LA. Crestadoro would have been a member of this committee if he had lived and *The Library Journal* noted:

> At a meeting of the local committee at Manchester, Mr. Alderman Baker in the chair, it was noted – after a passage of resolutions of regret at the death of Professor Crestadoro – to recommend that the date of the conference should be the last week in September.[545]

### *The City Jackdaw*

Hurrah for *The City Jackdaw*! In a heavily sarcastic piece in the 9 January 1880 issue the writer attacks the grudging obituaries, the disparaging criticism with which Manchester men have been remembered, particularly by the *City News*. The main focus of the piece is the author William Hepworth Dixon who died on 29 December 1879, but Crestadoro was also included as one who has also been unjustly shuffled off:

> I do not object to the quantity, but the quality of the so-called criticisms; yet, surely, more than thirty-three lines for Dixon, twenty and a half for Crestadoro, might have been given, when, in mid-winter, column after column, week after week, can be ad nauseum, of 'Leaves from a Journal' of mid-summer; shall we be compelled to suffer the mid-winter 'Leaves' in midsummer? But then, a live dog, Solomon tells us, is more valuable than a dead lion.

The section on Crestadoro has some errors, such as employment at the BM, and some exaggerations (even I would not claim he was a scientist of world-wide fame) but the whole sweep is superb:

> Cavaliere Andrea Crestadoro, *Knight of the Crown of Italy*, was Chief Librarian of the Public Free Libraries of Manchester from 1864 to 7 April, 1879, on which date he died, aged 71. He had for two years previous to this (1862) been specifically engaged as a cataloguer, from the British Museum, where he had served under his countryman, Sir Antonio Panizzi, K.C.B., when Chief Librarian of the British Museum, and who, strange to say, died the day after Cavaliere Crestadoro, on the 8 April, 1879, aged 82. Cavaliere Crestadoro was a most learned and courteous gentleman to all who needed his services; not only as a librarian, but as a cataloguer (a far more onerous and difficult art), also as a scientist of world-wide fame, which may be seen from the City News of 26 April, 1870, p. 2 on 'Dr. Crestadoro as a Balloonist'. This gentleman not only gave us one of the most scientific and useful Catalogues of the Books in our Free Reference Library known in the world, but he had published scientific works on various subjects, in English, French, and Italian, besides being a Latin and Greek scholar. On the death of this gentleman on the 7 April, 1879, there appeared a notice in the next issue of the *City News*, 12 April, on the 'Death of Crestadoro' (note the terseness of the title), which consisted of twenty and a half lines; three of the lines were sufficient to give his name, occupation, age and death, the remaining seventeen and a half consisted of a querulous query, to a dead man, why he had not published another and continuous catalogue of the Reference Library since 1864, he having 'completed the first volume in one year and nine months.' 'Money has been voted for this work, and as the Libraries Committee is therefore not responsible for its non-completion, it is natural to ask who is,'… 'He was the author of some scientific, bibliographical, political, and economical pamphlets, and had patented several mechanical inventions.' Now if the *City News* critic had only known anything of what he was writing about, or the work of compiling a catalogue, he would have known that 'Crestadoro' was

> not to blame, especially after death, and had he really wished to serve his patrons, the public, he would not have put have put in the saving clause about the 'Libraries Committee,' who is alone to blame for the delay; but no! it was safer to bark at a dead lion, than ask a living chairman of the Libraries Committee that question, for he would have found out, and he knew it, that he had caught a Tartar. But the question is still open to him- to prove his pluck-when will the next volume of the Free Reference Library Catalogue be published?

## The Two Italians

It was not just *The City Jackdaw* that picked up the oddity of the two great Italian librarians of England dying in the same week, one on the Monday and one on the Tuesday. Panizzi had been long retired from the BM, he left in 1866, but the venom was still there from those who had so resented an Italian taking over a national institution. There were shameful obituaries of Panizzi. *The Bookseller* was one of the most spiteful: 'Panizzi in the flesh was a far from lovable personage. Scarcely anyone in the Museum liked him; the London booksellers hated him, and no one ever did business with him pleasantly.'

I have not found anything in the sources for Crestadoro that suggests there was any resentment of his nationality. In Manchester, there was much pride in their exotic and scholarly Italian professor. However, a shocking letter arrived after his death, riddled with malice against an Italian.

The Library Committee did not rush to appoint Crestadoro's successor. There was a mention of this in the *Manchester Evening News* for Tuesday, 22 April 1879:

> Though there will be a meeting of the Libraries' Committee at the Town Hall to-morrow it is not anticipated that the subject of appointing a successor to Dr. Crestadoro will be dealt with on that occasion, but will stand over for the general meeting of the Committee on the last Wednesday of the month.

As with Crestadoro's own appointment, there was no need to advertise for there could be no doubt on who would be the next Chief Librarian. In May the Council formally appointed Charles Sutton; he was clearly Crestadoro's natural successor. As the *Manchester Evening News* reported on Wednesday, 7 May 1879:

> Mr. Alderman BAKER said that he had great pleasure in asking the Council to concur in a resolution unanimously passed at the last meeting of the Free Libraries Committee. The committee had no hesitation whatever after the long experience they had of Mr. Sutton in fixing upon him as the most fitting person they could think of as the successor of Mr. Crestadoro.

Sutton's salary was set at £220. Crestadoro was at £400 when he died, a testimony of his worth.

The news of Crestadoro's death, then Sutton's promotion and the ensuing vacancy for sub librarian brought enquiries from outsiders eager to apply for such a prestigious appointment.

As early as 28 April 1879, a Henry Cochrane, son of the Late Major Robert Cochrane of the Light Brigade, who was employed at Birkenhead Literary & Scientific Society expressed interest in applying for Sutton's post: 'hearing that you have been appointed Head Librarian of your Institution'. This is of course premature. Another, James Denson, wrote in on 30 April: 'I see a account of the lamented decease of Mr. Crestadoro late Chief Librarian that there is a vacancy occurring'. He is out of work but acquainted with Mr. Bellhouse of the Gas Dept and Mr. John, Mr

Thomas Wrigley of the Nuisance Cttee, and Ex-Councillor Anderton. This seems a rather desperate and forlorn hope but again reveals how widely it was assumed that Sutton was now Chief Librarian.

On one such letter the signature is indecipherable. The contents of this letter are appalling in their spite and sneers at Panizzi and Crestadoro. The writer badly miscalculated in believing Crestadoro's deputy, who had grown up under his benevolent tutelage would approve such sentiments:

> --Hill
>
> M Aybole Ayrshire
>
> May 6 1879
>
> Dear Sir
>
> I am pleased to note your decent English name as Chief Librarian for Manchester for altho' Dr. Crestadoro may have been a very decent and qualified man, I do not think that neither he, nor any other foreigner should be allowed to fill any such position, as long as there are better qualified Englishmen & Scotsmen to do so. I say the same as regards Panizzi of the British Museum, he gets his true character in this month's Bookseller which see. Tis rather strange the two should go off the boards together.
>
> My object however in now addressing you is to see if you could do something for me in your library by your elevation. There will be an opening and as I have been looking out for such a situation I started to entertain the idea. You might do a decent fellow a good turn. I have a thorough knowledge etc."

There is a curt note on the back from Sutton that this was answered on May 6 as 'No vacancies'. Unlike this Scotsman, Crestadoro was indeed a very decent man.

## Aftermath

As after any death, bits and pieces remain to be tidied up. On the 5 May 1879, Crestadoro's old bête noire, the Postmaster General, contacted the Chairman of the Committee to sort out the correspondence:

> Referring to the correspondence addressed to the late Mr. Crestadoro of the 'Free Library' I beg to inform you that I have given instructions for all letters re-addressed to him at the Free Library to be delivered there. I have done this in reliance on your promise to return to me at once any that may not belong to the library.

Expressions of regret were noted, mixed in with ordinary Free Library business. One such is from the distinguished doctor Thomas Radford who sent in the annual reports of St Mary's Hospital and added in his accompanying letter to Sutton: 'I was extremely sorry to hear of the death of your valued associate the Chief Librarian.'

Others, whilst expressing regret, were concerned to set the record straight. Richard Garnett at the BM wrote to Axon on 10 April 1879: 'You will of course have heard of the loss we have sustained in the death of Sir Anthony Panizzi, and I am very sorry to see that of Mr. Crestadoro also announced. Could you write an account of Mr Crestadoro for the Library Journal?'[546]

In the next letter, on 15 April 1879, he corrected the idea in some newspapers that Crestadoro had been employed at the BM: 'I am very much obliged for the Guardian and the very interesting

memoir of Dr. Crestadoro. I am not aware that he was at any time engaged in the Museum, and think that if Sir A. Panizzi ever employed him it must have been in some private commission.'[547]

On 29 May, the Boys' Reading Room opened in the converted cellar at the Hulme Branch: this had been Crestadoro's plan. Previously this had been a wine cellar, the tenants had left, and Crestadoro had proposed the conversion. Although at first considered impractical, this proved to be the only viable solution for a much needed extension.

Soon it was business as usual. The second LA Conference was held with great success in Manchester, chaired by Thomas Baker. As the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* recorded on 23 September, 1879, both Thomas Baker and Sutton had inherited powerful positions for the LA Council had resolved on June 6:

> That Alderman Baker be elected vice-president of the association in the place of the late Rev. Dr.Malet.
>
> That Mr C. W. Sutton be elected on the council of the association to fill the Place of the late Cavaliere A. Crestadoro.

It was Axon who kept Crestadoro's name alive for a few years at least. In several of his papers and articles Axon continued to praise Crestadoro's catalogues and explored further his ideas on universal bibliography.

## Mrs Crestadoro

I worried about Mrs. Crestadoro's fate after her husband died. Her age is uncertain, as different certificates conflict. But she was in her fifties at least in 1879 and how would a woman of this age survive without family or pension? Hopefully, Crestadoro may have had a life insurance scheme, a fairly common way of providing for dependants.

Mrs. Crestadoro received a payment of one month's salary from Manchester Free Libraries, a customary amount for widows of valued library staff. On one occasion back in March 1863, the Committee had paid two months salary with profuse commiserations to Mr.Blackley's widow: 'in consideration of the faithful and efficient manner in which the late Mr.Blackley discharged his duties in the Reference Library from the time of its formation to his death.' In comparison, Sutton's letter of 29 May 1879 seems curt with no condolences or concern expressed:

> The Committee have decided to give you a month's salary instead of the week's salary which was due to your late husband. I will pay the week's salary (£7.13.10) at any time you may call or send here. The balance (£25.12.10) will be paid by the Treasurer at the Town Hall on the receipt of the enclosed form duly signed by you.

There is a note from the William Shaen to Sutton on 5 August 1879 that she had not informed him of this payment. Presumably he had been pursuing some recompense on her behalf: 'I am much obliged by your note of the 4th inst. Mrs Crestadoro had not reported to me the kind vote of the Committee'.

Despite my initial concerns, she did not end up in poverty and died possessing more than her husband. She returned to London soon after Crestadoro died: an E.M. Cristodoro is recorded in 1881 in Metroplitan Archives, (RG11/206 f.75), as a lodger in the home of Arthur H. Premitt. In 2011 I found a new hit for her, an entry in the Index of Wills and Probate. To my surprise she died at a very desirable residence in London, 32 St. Johns Wood Terrace, one of those curves of Georgian terraces near Regents Park and as: 'a widow without issue father or mother' she left £650

4s 9d to her sister, Jane Richley, now at 71 Tavistock Road, Westbourne Park. Presumably this was family money from her side, unless Crestadoro had indeed more resources than found at probate. (This is not entirely impossible as he was a secretive character; in his application for naturalisation Crestadoro had expressed an intention of purchasing land.)

The death certificate is extremely garbled, listing a Margaret Creesta DORA at 32 St. Johns Wood Terrace, aged 69 on her death on 16 March 1888, the cause of death is given as Atrophy Syncope. Her occupation is given as 'Widow of Frank Creesta Dora an interpreter'. (Interpreter must be a mistake for inventor or perhaps indexer.)

Jane Richley died on 3 January 1890 and left all her money and property to various friends, the executor was Oswald Bartholomew Hughes, Tobacconist, of 44 Great Queen Street. The addresses of these friends are mainly clustered around this familiar territory where she, her sister and Crestadoro had once lived. With this, all comes to an end. Perhaps this is where Crestadoro's manuscripts, papers and models finally vanished.

But at least Mrs Crestadoro had a comfortable widowhood. Crestadoro with his beliefs in the rights of women and support for their education would not have been a husband who took his wife's money for himself. (The Married Women's Property Act of 1870, a radical change that paved the way to equality and the vote, won financial rights for wives but did not apply retrospectively.)

## The Crestadoro Nephew

The mysterious nephew whom Crestadoro brought back from Italy a few years before his death disappears without trace. According to *Momus*, Crestadoro placed him in a school where he could learn to be an English gentleman. It does seem sad that the nephew was sent away to school, for that is what Crestadoro's phrase of 'placed' implies. What a traumatic transplanting for an orphaned Italian boy, and why was he not kept at home to be educated as a day boy in Manchester?

There are two possible clues as to his identity.

In the 1881 Census there was a Luigi Crestadore living in London as a lodger at 1 Wellington Place, Chiswick. His age is given as sixteen and he is following the traditional Italian occupation of paper stainer. This seems a possible fit; the boy would have been around ten when Crestadoro brought him to England. The case is strengthened by Luigi Crestadore's birthplace being given as Spezzia. According to Crestadoro's will his remaining family had moved there from Genoa. Mrs Crestadoro was living in London by 1881: perhaps they came together.

The later censuses for London give no more likely references, though there is a mention in the 1901 Census of a Luigi Dora, age 36, shop assistant living with an entire household of Italians, all listed as shop assistants. There are no details of birthplace.

There is a shipping listing for a Luigi Crestadoro (mistakenly copied as Crestadors) who embarked from Liverpool to New York on the *Servia*, 31 May 1890. His age is twenty-seven and his birth date 'abt 1863', which again would fit with the missing nephew.

If Luigi left England for America does he have descendants? There are some of the same name who became inventors in Canada and in the United States. Also in the United States there is a Crestadoro who served as a high-ranking officer in the Air Force.

Or did he return to Italy? I have contacted a few who have the rare name Crestadoro but no connection has emerged.

## What is lost

Crestadoro's will was drawn up on 2 January 1874, witnessed by Sutton and Brindley and proved at probate on 30 May 1879 by Shaen. The estate was valued at £100. It is a grandiose document with little substance. The nephews and nieces, the women in Genoa would not have benefited.

Nothing is preserved of the debris of Crestadoro's life: the model balloons, the Corona d'Italia, the sliding weight at the Hulme Branch, the glider in the empty room, the Joint Stock company manuscript, and even the famous poker that was still around in the 1950s have now all vanished. There are no portraits, photographs, no corporate testimonials or busts, and no diaries, letters or postcards to be treasured. I still wonder if such relics may rest somewhere in a box in the basement of a Manchester Council office or library. I am convinced that Crestadoro, with his interest in photography, in collecting the portraits of eminent Manchester citizens, would have had an image taken, but again there is no trace. William Cotgreave of indicator fame collected and published photographs of the Free Librarians and early LA members. Most of Crestadoro's contacts and friends are there: Cowell, Credland, Richard Garnett, Thomas Hand, Mullins, Pink, Sutton but not Crestadoro.

## What remains

His books, indexes, catalogues, patents, letters to newspapers, a few personal letters and the documents embedded in the Manchester Library Archives are the direct evidence of his existence. Piarist vows, graduation, marriage and death certificates, alien landing registrations, naturalisation papers, and his will signpost his earthly life.

A few key articles from library historians and information scientists confirm that he did invent and achieve significant advances in data structures. He had in fact a very modern mind.

His beloved patents have left no significant mark but somehow never quite vanish. Once stumbled across who can forget the Impulsoria and the Metallic Balloon?

A substantial and permanent legacy from Crestadoro is the entry of women into the Manchester Free Libraries, and eventually into all the Public Libraries in Britain.

## Secrets

I do suspect that Crestadoro may have been more than he appeared: an agent for Cavour perhaps. There are hints of powerful connections, there are missing months in 1860-1861 and association with slightly shady characters. He hid his priesthood, apparently without regret. Did he confide this to his wife or to any of his English friends?

## Crestadoro the Englishman

What stands out is Crestadoro's pride in England, in democratic freedom and in his own naturalisation as a citizen, especially as a Mancunian. He aspired to an ideal of the English gentleman: honour and duty are his virtues. His sympathies are for radical reform, decency, and richly fulfilled lives for all. There is a simplicity and happiness about Crestadoro that shines through all his intellectual complexities. Having found England to his liking he remained there, and for evermore, regarded the country as hospitable and kind to foreigners.

Crestadoro paid tribute to this theme whenever possible, and however unlikely the context. His drawing of the model balloon is draped with the banner: 'England Welcome to All Nations' and he ends *The Art of Making Catalogues* with a resounding plea for England to lead the way for a

UNIVERSAL CATALOGUE, the most glorious of undertakings that would convert the world into a single library for all: 'It should be for mighty England to embrace the Literature of the world. It would be the noblest Monument of the Civilization of the Age, and the noblest present which this Great Nation could offer to the world.'

England welcomed Crestadoro and he was spared sneers and coldness. He brought much to the country of his adoption: to publishing, cataloguing, to the Free Libraries, to the people of Manchester, to women and to the young librarians he encouraged. His inventions entertained and amazed the visitors to three exhibitions. England was enriched by the presence of this picturesque and very decent human being.

## Epithets

There is no gravestone epithet for Crestadoro, but the various mentions in books and journals, both contemporary and posthumous, reinforce the picture of his gentle nature and the inventiveness of his thinking. This is how he is remembered:

> In private life he secured the esteem of many friends. His conversation had an element in it of genial humour, and was enriched by the fruit of diligent reading in different languages and a keen observation in various countries. (W.E.A. Axon, 1879)[548]
>
> In private life he was a pleasant and genial companion (W.E.A. Axon, 1879)[549]
>
> The genial and scholarly Dr. Crestadoro (W.H.K. Wright 1898)[550]
>
> Mr. Crestadoro, the very able librarian of the Manchester Free Library (Richard Garnett 1899)[551]
>
> Dr. Andrea Crestadoro, a man of original ideas and organising capacity (1903)[552]
>
> Dr. Andrea Crestadoro, one of the most picturesque figures in bibliothecal annals…a complex person…did much in his fifteen years of office to free the libraries from galling rules and regulations (CUSTOS VERITAS, 1922)[553]
>
> Dr. Crestadoro (an Italian refugee) a man of great learning (*Manchester Guardian*, 1927)[554]
>
> The library has been fortunate in a line of able librarians, of whom none is more charming a figure than the third, Dr. Andrea Crestadoro of Genoa. Although his pamphlet, 'Du pouvoir temporal et de la Souverainte Pontificale,' which is said to have suggested to Cavour and Menabrea how the Papacy and the Kings of Italy might dwell together in peace, and other writings, confer some consequences upon him, he seems to-day a curious figure, with his inventions and unprofitable patents, at least two memorable experiments were carried out. (*Manchester Guardian*, 1934)[555]
>
> One of the most interesting and valuable members of the [Italian] community was Dr. Andrea Crestadoro, described as 'an Italian by birth, English from choice and librarian through opportunity'. (N.J. Frangopulo, 1977)[556]

## Twenty and a half lines

*The City News'* meagre offering on Crestadoro was twenty and a half lines. Axon's *Manchester Guardian* obituary ran to around 220 lines. In digital times lines may have less immediate meaning as a measure but are beautifully easy to count.

I have added 188,177 words on Crestadoro, calculated by Word as 17,912 lines, an extreme in the other direction. Too much 'Alf's Button', as my mother always said of me. However, as an American scholar, Thomas Mark Dousa, noted in our discussions on Crestadoro's indexing of periodicals: 'it's great to hear that somebody is working on a full-fledged biography of Crestadoro, who has gotten far too little attention in the cataloging and classification community.'[557]

Hopefully this book, hardly a biography, might lead others to re-appraise his influence. I owe a great deal to Professor Crestadoro.

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[540] Derek Jones, *London's 1st public library,* Section 9 Staff, 2006, www.derekjones.org/London/first/public/library.htm

[541] Jones, *London's 1st public library*

[542] W.E.A Axon, 'Dr. Crestadoro', *Manchester Guardian.* (8 April, 1879)

[543] manchesterhistory.net/ardwick/nicholls/nichopen.html

[544] W.E.A. Axon, *The Annals of Manchester: a chronological record from the earliest times to the end of 1885* (Manchester: Heywood, 1886)

[545] 'Manchester Conference', *The Library Journal,* 4:5 (May 31 1879) p.157

[546] UML, W.E.A. Axon Papers 1056

[547] UML, W.E.A. Axon Papers 1057

[548] Axon, 'Dr. Crestadoro'

[549] Axon, 'Andrea Crestadoro', *DNB*

[550] W.H.K. Wright, 'The Library Association 1877-1897', *The Library* (1898) p.204

[551] Richard Garnett, *Essays in Librarianship and Bibliography*, (London: Allen, 1899) p.46

[552] 'The Jubilee of the City Free Library', *Manchester Guardian*, (11 March 1903)

[553] CUSTOS VERITAS, 'Letters on our affairs'

[554] Italiano, 'Italians in Manchester', *Manchester Guardian*, (18 October 1927)

[555] The Librarians, *Manchester Guardian* (17 July 1934)

[556] Frangopulo, *Tradition in Action*

[557] Thomas Dousa, e-mail to author, February 2014